

WHEN WARHOL MENACED TUCSON • INSIDE S.P.'S RUBBER ROOM

TUCSON • ARIZONA

CITY MAGAZINE

MAY 1989 \$1.95



KROMIKO

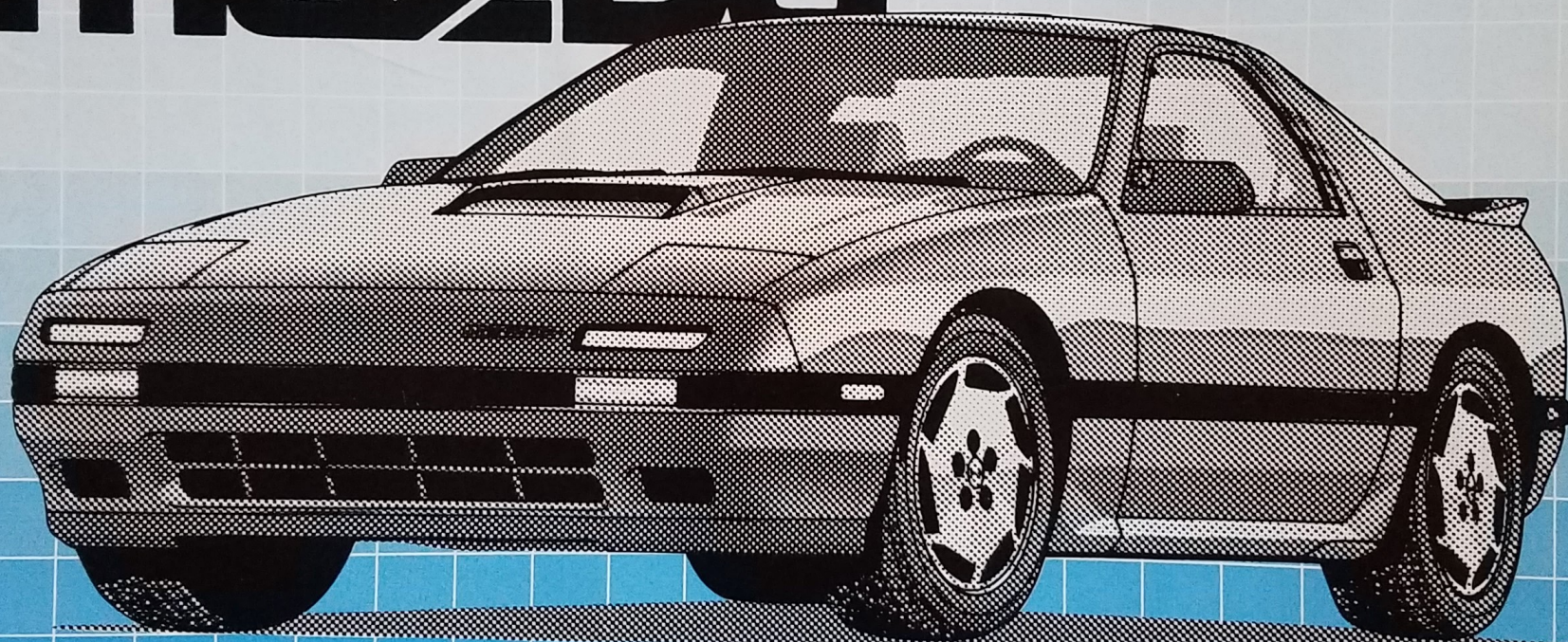
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Mark **Klett**
Timothy **O'Sullivan**
William **Bell**



Etherton/Stern
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N O W

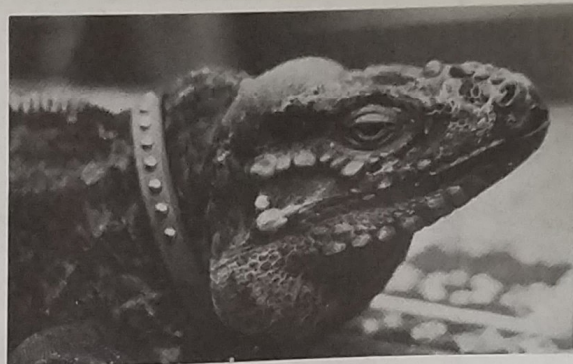


THE HAIR & SKIN

S T U D I O

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HOWDY



Howdy,

A few days ago my biped editor stumbled up to my rock to show me a manuscript recalling what happened twenty years ago when Andy Warhol came to Tucson. We lizards don't have steel-trap memories, so it came as a revealing story. This burg freaked out. From the reception they got, Warhol and his entourage of crazed actors, transvestites and assorted weirdos must've thought they'd landed in Salt Lake City.

The day after I scanned the Warhol tale I saw in the paper that Arizona Theatre Company is drowning in debt, and is gonna drop the curtain for good this summer unless people come through with a million bucks for it. One of the reasons for the financial woe, as ATC analyzes it, was the '87-'88 season, which apparently burst the envelope of what the Tucson audience is willing to tolerate and support. You can do *Our Town* in this town, but not *Glengarry Glen Ross* — at least that seems to be the lesson. Step across the boundary of conventional taste, and you get yourself kicked in the kiester — like Warhol did a generation ago.

Or do you? Here at *City Mag* we've successfully challenged some conventions, such as the one that says local magazines have to be polite, deferential balls of fluff. Down on East Congress Street there's a restaurateur/sculptor who's created an environment that would challenge even a groovy lizard like me — see our story on page 18. And what about Edward Abbey, who defied with success every establishment notion about literature and life, and yet checked out in March in a hail of fond and respectful encomia? Think about it: Ed Abbey, whose writing may yet inspire someone to blow up Glen Canyon Dam, saluted in his passing by this whole blessed, growth-drunk town?

There's no clear pattern here, just contradictions. And that's what's encouraging. A city is alive only when its pieces don't fit together, when events don't always make sense, when its bazaar of ideas is restless and volatile. We need debate and disagreement; we need people like Abbey and institutions like ATC — but only if they'll keep risking their asses.

My check to ATC is in the mail — with a note regarding the value of staying out there on the edge.

Iggy

STAFF

Founder
Ignacio "Iggy" Lizardo

Art Director
James J. Forsmo

Calendar Editor
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Max Cannon

Editor
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Norma Coile

Advertising Director
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Account Executives
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Promotional Sales Assistant
Mary Thomson

Contributors
Byrd Baylor, Geof Gribbin,
Jim Griffith, Alan Harrington,
Brad Hansel, Janet Mitchell,
Shirley Pasternack, Ray Ring,
Bettina Single, Larry Winter.



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Bookman's, Arizona's largest bookstore.
1930 East Grant Road, at Campbell. 325-5767.

LETTERS

Rape Survivors' Account Fast-Paced, Chilling

I read Laura Greenberg's "Survivors of the Prime Time Rapist" with fascination. If I had not received my subscription copy of *City Magazine*, and had seen it on the news stand, I would have immediately bought one. As a resident of Tucson and a neighbor of Brian Larriva's, I was terrified by his three-year rampage. Ms. Greenberg is to be commended for her journalistic scoop, and her fast-paced, chilling account. And congratulations to *City Magazine*, for providing the community an opportunity to gain insight into the nightmare it suffered.

Rita Garitano

Accusations of Exploitation

I was reluctant to read Laura Greenberg's article about victims of the Prime Time Rapist for fear it would evoke the anger and pervasive uneasiness I experienced that summer before Brian Larriva's suicide. But I did so to be made aware, as was the author's intent, of the reality of rape and its aftermath.

When I turned the page and saw the ad for Benjamin Supply I was dumbfounded. The position of this ad in the middle of an article on rape was grossly insensitive. It made me suspect that *City Magazine* was simply exploiting the sensationalism of rape to sell magazines, just as Benjamin Supply was exploiting sex to sell bathroom fixtures.

Gayle Jandrey

Editor's note: The Benjamin Supply ad featured a stylish photo of two women, fully dressed, posed with designer kitchen and bath fixtures. We do not agree it was "exploiting sex."

A Wonderful, Talented Letter Writer

You have a wonderful, talented staff. I, for one, am very pleased. They did superior work in writing about our Art Festival in the March "Where to Howl." The writer described our festival with effective, enthusiastic words.

You publish a great magazine for the Tucson community.

Nancy C. Von Wald
Academic director, Fisher Foundation School

In Exile, Pining for the Fox

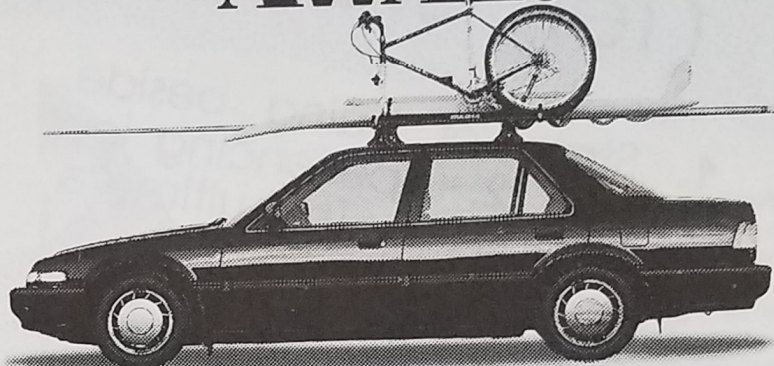
As an expatriate Tucsonan more than ten years removed, I have been moved many times almost to write you — thoughts about articles concerning old friends and acquaintances, about neighborhood nostalgia (Menlo Park, Snob Hollow...). I have come very close to writing to compare notes on development issues (I'm on the planning board of this New England hill town, which faces development pressures not entirely unlike those I fled when I left the West). But it was not until I read Diane Boyer's article about the Fox Theater that I finally had to write.

I am not motivated by controversy — Ms. Boyer's writing is certainly accurate to the best of my knowledge, and it increased that knowledge of the Fox's history many-fold. I write to convey my abiding affection for what stands in my memory as not a movie theater but *the* movie theater, the standard by which all others must be judged.

Ms. Boyer encapsulates the last two decades of the Fox's operating history in a single short paragraph, but it is that period — after the renovation of 1956 — that I remember best. My big brother's first job was as an usher there; the kiddie matinees did indeed continue through most of the 'fifties, although maybe not under the Mickey Mouse Club aegis, and it seemed to me to be the cultural epicenter of Tucson. Where else could one see the latest yo-yo tricks demonstrated by a professional yo-yoist?

Fragments of memory are recalled... waiting for our parents as the blind accordionist across the street serenaded... the megavolt static electricity shocks from those gold-leafed columns, which I believe were actually wired for electricity... the endless years of not being allowed into the balcony and the gratification of growing up and going up... the endless hours of staring up at that chandelier and starburst design on the ceiling while waiting for the show to

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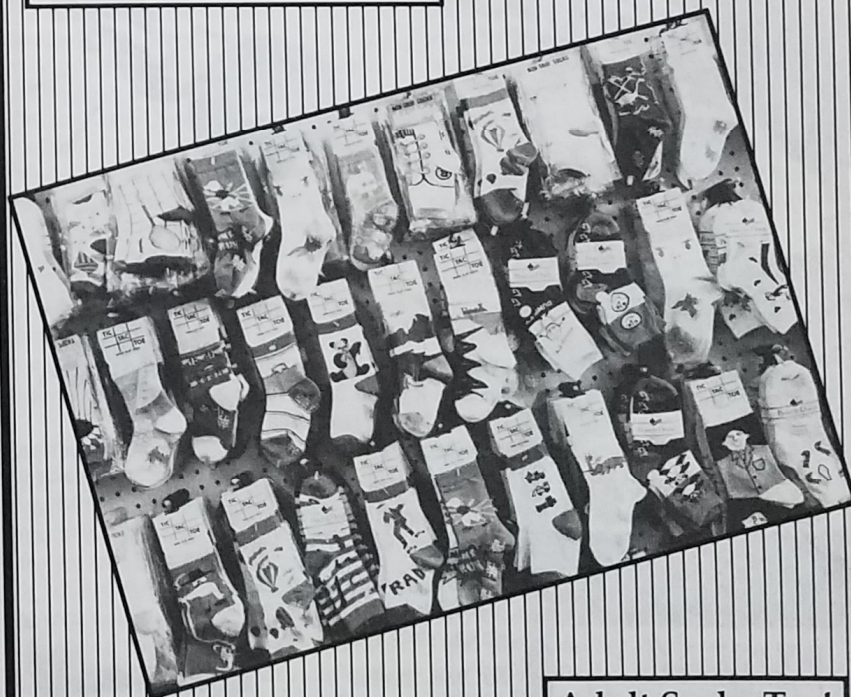


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Franzi Sez:

We started the car wash 6 months ago and began running ads in this rag just to see if anyone really reads it.

Well, City Mag readers have really come through - with cars, vans, Suburbans, Blazers and Volvos.

And you guys are buying out our "oldies" tapes faster than we can stock them.

Not bad, thanks!

P.S. We've put in a shoe shine stand just to see if you care about keeping those Tony Lamas polished!

Find out how - We do common things uncommonly well. Remember, I'm counting.

LETTERS

begin

I hope the Fox can reopen, restored to its former grandeur, but the "restaurant-bar-theater-nightclub" your editorial note envisions as "a time machine to the movie palace days of the 'thirties" might be a bit overdone. How about just a good old theater — stage and screen — like the *real* old days?

Jonathan Nix
Becket, Massachusetts

Individual Liberty 1, Creeping Emotional Sloth 0

On today, March 7, the day of the reversal of my conviction for littering for the placement of a participatory work of art called "Secret Identity" on West Speedway, we all won. We didn't win all I asked for, which was to strike down as unconstitutional the Arizona statute on littering because it gives carte blanche to local police and courts to act as censors in the guise of protecting the city's right to regulate where garbage is dumped. And I failed (because, as my attorney, Dennis Murphy, explained, "You blew the city prosecutor away with your opening argument") to present the miniature "Secret Identity" which I had brought to court in my briefcase. With it I wished to invite the court to view the local statute through the eyes of the spirit the Indians saw overlooking this land and to see it could do so without irreverence to the city's right to protect the land and the welfare of its citizens. At the end I would look like an Apache Gan Dancer (in a grocery bag with eyeholes cut out) looking down on a tableau (on a table) of broken glass, candles, a bone and a doll covered with dirt, in turn covering the Arizona Revised Statutes opened to the clause on littering. Ah well, Gan with the wind, as they say.

But we did win the right to require the government to specifically punish those who truly have no care for the land instead of those who inadvertently clash with local taste in the pursuit of ideas and new understandings of beauty.

I don't know if you're aware of how close we've come to real suppression of individual liberty in this country, what with the removal of bits of Shakespeare and Mark Twain in schoolbooks and libraries; with ordinances in Tucson against having certain items or themes in your yard; ordinances in Phoenix requiring permits to have a sculpture in your yard; a California ordinance against ugly yards; a judgement against cellist Charlotte Moreman for public nudity in a private club; the confusion of legitimate and illegitimate interests in controlling pornography, religious fantasy, satire, books and movies and simultaneously the widening of what is acceptable destruction of other governments, people and the earth itself.

But today a tiny erg of challenge has been successfully asserted against this creeping emotional sloth, fear of change and mental inertia.

We won an affirmation of a serious principle in an absurd case: the principle of freedom of the intellect to explore without having to defer to standards of mass taste, and the freedom to dream of other horizons for human identity than manicured lawns, media bytes, patterned programming and bottom-line journalism. We won back at least an iota of the independence for which the creators of the bill of rights risked their lives.

I believe Thomas Jefferson would have been gratified by Judge Lawrence Fleischman's quick insight into the trivial nature of the city's case against a work of art, and would have supported my right to express myself as I did even if he did not understand it. (But I believe he would have understood.) Because, for instance, Jefferson didn't want our judges to wear wigs as their British counterparts did. He said, "We must not have our justices looking like rats peeking out of oakum."

I can't believe he would want our artists to have to fear similar pairs of beady little eyes peeking at them out of culture-bound prejudices.

Dennis Williams

We love to hear from you, whether to compliment or complain. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Sign your letters and include a return address and phone number (which we won't publish). Send your letters to City Magazine, 1050 E. River Rd., Suite 200, Tucson, Arizona 85718.

WHERE TO



Spring Serenade

May 7

Take Mom out and start celebrating her day a week early in the annual spring concert by the Tucson Boys Chorus. This is downright inspirational — and it will endear you to that important lady. TCC Music Hall at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. General admission \$3-\$5. Reserved seats, \$7.50, available only at the Boys Chorus office. Info, 296-6277.

A Day Off

May 8

She's been stuffing your stomach since you were knee-high. Now it's your turn. Take Mom out of town for an all-you-can-eat pancake, eggs and sausage breakfast at Carter's Drive-In (on South Haskell) in Willcox. \$3.50 per person 6 a.m.-11 a.m. Info, 1-384-2272.

Bug Bouquet

May 13

Bored with roses? Celebrate Mom's day with a special reading about Inspector Mantis' adventures in "Trouble in Bugland." These folks at the Sonoran Arthropod Studies love to drive you buggy with enough insect trivia to win a game show. 11 a.m. at 2437 N. Stone Ave. Adm. \$1. Reservations, 884-7274.

More Traditional

May 14

The Tucson Botanical Gardens cordially invites all moms to be their guests today and enjoy a late spring flower from one of their gardens. Take out the one who gave you life. 2150 N. Alvernon. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Info, 326-9255.

And More...

May 14

All children, parents, brothers, sisters, husbands, boyfriends et al. are invited to bring that special lady to an evening concert by the John Denman Quartet, featuring some good, gutsy jazz. Free at 7 p.m. in the courtyard at St. Philip's Plaza at River and Campbell. Sponsored by the Merchants Association.

The Unashamed Accompanist

May 2

Continuing the UA Faculty Lecture Series, Paula Fan, Tucson's unabashed accompanists' libber, speaks of the musical joys and trials of an "assisting artist," and salutes the memory of Gerald Moore, the original Unashamed Accompanist. She will be assisted by a grand piano and Prof. Emeritus Arthur Kay. A boost for all second bananas. Arizona Health Sciences Center Main Auditorium, 7:30 p.m., room 2600. Free. Info, 621-1877.

Cinco De Mayo

May 5-8

Tucson's Mexican-American community

commemorates Mexico's victory over the French at the town of Puebla with a four-day outdoor fiesta at Kennedy Park. Plenty of food, fun and frolic beginning at 4:30 p.m. on Thurs. and Fri. On Sat. & Sun., it runs from 11 a.m.-11 p.m. at Kennedy Park. Free. Info, 889-4878. On May 6, Oury Park's 9th annual Cinco de Mayo festival features live music, food booths and games from noon 'til midnight. A barrio tradition. Free. 600 W. St. Mary's Rd. Info, 791-4788.

Sky Sculpture

May 10-July 12

Kids take to this naturally and adults still long for it. Even if you don't wanna go fly a kite, don't miss "Kites, Sculpture Sky High," an international collection of kites at the Old Pueblo Museum from the traditional Oriental (bamboo and rice paper dragon slayers) to concepts by contemporary artists. Stunt-kiting and kite-making will be demonstrated, and catch the giant flying centipede made by the grand kite master of Taiwan. Let your dreams soar. Foothills Mall, Ina and La Cholla. Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Sat., 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sun., noon-5 p.m. Free. Info, 742-7191.

Centurians' Bash

May 13

If the parties you've been attending lately leave you lacking, try this one on for size. More than five thousand (last year's tally) upwardly

mobile, attractive folks will gather for the annual celebration of the Centurians' fundraiser (all proceeds to St. Mary's hospice). This year's theme is "The Great Wild and Woolly Western Roundup." So dig through your closets and gather those secret cowperson duds. Spurs, boots, Levis, Stetsons, bola ties, gingham, pearl buttons, etc.. The wilder, the better. Prizes for the best outfits and raffles and tons of food. At Old Tucson. The action begins 6-9 p.m. with cocktails and a buffet: tacos and barbecued chicken and burgers. Then kick up your heels with your pard to live music from 9 p.m.-1 a.m. \$30 a person. Tickets and transportation info, 322-2336. Other info, 622-5833, ext. 1412.

Mend Your Madness

May 15-19

Fix yourself up by understanding modern manias at the 21st Annual Southwestern School for Behavioral Health Studies conference, open to the public. Hear nationally known authorities talk on addiction studies, chronic mental illness, abusive problems and related maladies. A sampling of workshops includes "The Dark Side... Teens and Cults," "Kids, Drugs and Rock 'n' Roll" and "Treating Family Members of Persons with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder." Sponsored by Carondelet Health Care, Inc., with co-sponsors Motorola, Inc. O'Rielly Care Center, Sierra Tucson and Westcenter. General sessions are \$15. Registration info, 721-3866.

You Are What You Wear

May 16-June 13

The watercolors of Michael Ott depict people by their clothing, rather than the families or persons themselves. How many of us make the same judgments? His paintings show the humor in this. The show highlights, appropriately, his series on western shirts. Photorealism is hard enough; in watercolor, it's damn near impossible. Ott is a professor of art at the University of Kansas. Beth O'Donnell Gallery, Ltd. Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m. St. Philip's Plaza, River and Campbell. Info, 299-6998.

Arts Genesis, Inc.

May 16

Using contemporary problems for themes, students from Richey Elementary School in Old Pasqua Village present an evening of unusual theater in four operas they've written. Don't look for La Bohème; these kids are gonna show you what life in the '80s is about — and you can guess what that includes. (Then again, maybe worries haven't changed that much from Mozart's times.) Showtime, 6:30 p.m.; community discussion should begin around 8:30 p.m. 2209 N. 15th Ave. Free. Info, 323-0185.

Big, Bad Bugs

May 24

Jim and Bettye Harvey, inventors and promoters of the Discovery Scope, have revolutionized how people can examine a world smaller than a dime. Discovery is a hand-held microscope which allows a lively and close view of living arthropods, flowers and a variety of other organisms (e.g., pond scum). Get the lowdown on small at 7:30 p.m. 2437 N. Stone Ave. Free. Info, 884-7274.

Sarsaparilla and Suspenders

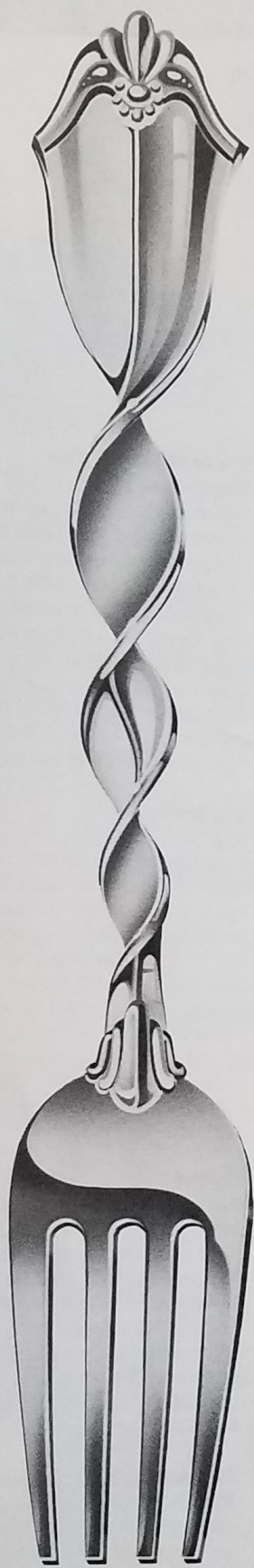
May 27-29

Step back in time at Old Tucson and enjoy an old-fashioned Memorial Day weekend in the West. It's the 1920s and that means carousel rides, sarsaparilla specials, strolling barber-shop quartets, authentic brass bands, and '80s face painters to make you look authentic. Buy yourself a mustache. Adm. charge. Info, 883-6457.

It's A Date!

(But you gotta be on time!)

If you want an event, program, etc. listed in **Where To Howl**, information must be submitted in writing six weeks before the first day of the month of publication (for instance May 15 for a July listing). **Choice** and **Where to Howl** are a selective guide by *City Magazine*. Mail to Calendar Editor, 1050 E. River Rd., Suite 200, Tucson, Arizona 85718. Info, 293-1801.



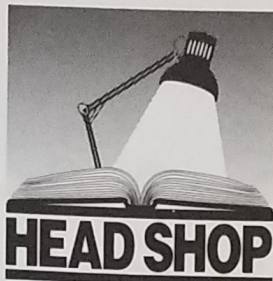
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WHERE TO HOWL



Hot Lights May 2

Arizona Theatre Company's production manager, Kent Conrad, discusses how the leafy stage setting was created in the current production — "A Walk in The Woods" by Lee Blessing, a penetrating look at the Soviet-American arms negotiations. He'll also gossip on ATC's upcoming move into the Temple of Music and Art. Wilmot Library, 3 p.m. Free. 791-4627.

Break Fast May 2

Forget the 3-martini power lunch. There isn't time anymore. Instead, hit breakfast and hear Earl K. Stice's lecture on "Taxes and Financial Reporting: How One Affects the Other." Fifteen bucks buys you interesting companions and new strategies in the competitive corporate world of information anxiety. Sponsored by the UA's College of Business and Public Administration's Alumni Council. Arizona Inn, 2200 E. Elm St., 7 a.m. Info, 621-2930.

Brain Bash May 2

Hang out on a thinker's ledge. The Magritte Sessions are about writing and ideas at the innovative edge of contemporary practice (their description). Anne Bunker Guest of Orts Theatre of Dance and Charles Alexander of Chax Press read at 7 p.m. in the Tucson Museum of Art. Sponsored by Chax Press and supported by TMA, Cafe Magritte, TPAC and the Arizona Commission on the Arts. Info on times, prices, 622-7109.

Native Spirits May 7

Bahti Indian Arts presents a talk on Native American Spirituality by Joseph Enos, a member of the Tohono O'odham tribe, at 1 p.m. in St. Philip's Plaza at River & Campbell. Info, 577-0290.

The Sting May 17

Don't be one of the thousands

who get in the way of black widows, brown recluses, snakes and other venomous creepers of the desert. Learn about your *earthly* neighbors in a seminar that shows off live creatures from the Arizona Sonora Desert Museum, and tells how to recognize them and avoid their bites. El Dorado Hospital, 7 p.m. Free, but registration required. Info, 721-5116.

Playwright Search

Are you hiding scripts in your closet? Madly hunting and pecking away on your old black portable? Producing bizarre, comedic Mac masterpieces that await an audience? The Gaslight Theatre is seeking new plays for upcoming seasons. Submit scripts or ideas to Tony Terry, c/o The Gaslight Theatre, 7000 East Tanque Verde, Tucson 85715. Questions? 886-9428.



Our Very Own Apr. 30

Live theater: "An Evening with Our Legislators," at the Arizona Historical Society from 5-7 p.m. State senators and representatives will answer some questions and dodge others. Sponsored by the League of Women Voters, the Tucson Women's Commission, National Organization for Women, Planned Parenthood, Junior League, National Council of Jewish Women, American Business Women's Association and others. Info, 749-9390.

Modern Heroes May 2

The World Wrestling Federation keeps acting out our myths in the ring. Revel in boulder-size hunks who get paid big bucks to twist each other's limbs off. Violence at its tamest. TCC arena at 7:30 p.m. Adm. charge. Info, 791-4101.

Mix 'n' Match May 5

The first annual "Denim to Diamonds" dinner/western dance at the Sheraton El Conquistador means what it

says. Acceptable attire ranges from low-rent Levis to cow patch suede to black tie and diamonds. Mix them together. Honorary chairpersons are U.S. Sen. Dennis DeConcini and savings & loan executive Floyd Sedlmayr, Jr. — Tucson's Man of the Year. Door prizes, including a paid party for 200 at Studebaker's, and a silent auction of western theme items. All proceeds to the Leukemia Society of America. Seating limited. Tickets \$65 per person. Info, 623-7752.

Cycle Mania May 5-7

Pima Velo Club sponsors the 4th annual premier Tucson Bicycle Classic. Four challenges attract more than 250 top racers from the West. You don't have to be a hardcore cyclist to join, but this isn't the time to decide to get in shape. Total purse, \$5,500. Registration and details, 884-5564.

Taste Tucson May 5-7

The Arizona Theater Guild gathered the crème de la crème of Tucson's restaurant industry and will lay out a savage culinary coup. Feast on samples of paté and original appetizers; beef, chicken and fish main dishes and desserts that make you guilt-ridden. When you're not eating, watch a slew of chefs in various cooking demos. May 5, from 7 p.m.-midnight, is the black tie gala (\$50 per person) featuring live music by "Street Pajama" and large samples of food and champagne. May 6, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., and May 7, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., it's \$10 in advance; \$12 at the door. TCC arena. Tickets, 791-4101.

Bright Lights, Big City May 6

"Downtown Saturday Night" brings shades of the '40s to our historic city center as hundreds of families and tourists stroll the streets of the E. Congress/Broadway area between 5th and 6th avenues just as they did 45 years ago. At least that's what the Tucson Pima Arts Council tells us. Galleries, boutiques, cafes and live tunes from 7-10 p.m. Everyone from rich lawyers to paint splattered wanna-be artists. The best human circus in town — don't miss. Sponsored by TPAC. Info, 299-7873.

All The Right Moves May 6, 20

Put on your soft shoes and step to the beat of square and contra dances (no cousin to Latin politics) when the Tucson Friends of Traditional Music hold parties twice a month. No experience necessary (beginners are given a training session a half-hour before dancetime). May 6, at 7:30 p.m. at YMCA, 5th Ave. and 6th St.; May 20, at 7:30 p.m. at Armory Park Rec. Center, 220 S. 5th Ave. Adm. TFTM members \$2; general \$3. Info, 1-384-2626.

Breaking Away May 6, 7

Push the pedal to the pavement in the third annual "Breakaway to the Border Bike Tour," a 140-mile, one-way, two-day mini-vacation on wheels, from Tucson to Douglas. All proceeds go toward multiple sclerosis research. Ride side-by-side with other cyclically-correct-clad volunteers in this feisty fundraiser. Registration info, 881-6707.

All the Abuse That Fits May 12-14

The Tucson Press Club presents the annual gridiron show, roasting our local finest by print, radio and broadcast journalists. The media's chance to poke fun at political heavies without losing their sources. Times and tickets, 791-4101. Other info, 622-1314.

Native Festival May 13, 27

Old Town Artisans presents free outdoor performances: May 13, Robert Morning Sky, of the Hopis, presents "Dances, Myths, Legends," assisted by Charles Sunshield and Edie Morning Sky. May 27, The Joaquin Brothers of the Tohono O'odham play their brand of chickenscratch from Sells. From 6 p.m.-10 p.m. at 186 N. Meyer (the micro-mist cooling system will be in operation). Info, 628-1492 or 623-6024.

Attention, Old Hippies May 17-19

Hundreds are expected to descend on the Phoenix Hyatt Regency and watch ex-gov Babbitt return to action as he leads the 25th anniversary celebration of the War on Poverty. Anyone interested in the welfare of low-income children and families is invited to attend. Workshops are planned and volunteers needed. Registration is \$60.



The Tucson Press Club's Annual Gridiron Show.

photo courtesy of Bob Broder

Stimulate Your Mind!

Highlighting this month's thrill-packed schedule of impressively intellectual events at the Tucson Convention Center, is the Tucson Press Club's Annual Gridiron Show. However, if such heady stuff is not your cup of Earl Grey, you can always try the ATC's production of "The Imaginary Invalid" by Moliere, the delicious Taste of Tucson benefit, concerts by both the Tucson Boys' and Girls' Choruses, or the Southern Arizona Light Opera Company's production of "My Fair Lady."

Tucson Convention Center

The Center of Attention

May Highlights

April 22-May 13 ATC presents "The Imaginary Invalid" by Moliere
 5 & 6 Tucson Symphony Orchestra with The Fifth Dimension
 5-7 Taste of Tucson
 7 Tucson Boys Chorus Mother's Day Concert
 10-13 Tucson Press Club Gridiron Show
 12 Tucson Girls Chorus
 17 & 18 Construction & Architecture Supply Show

18-21 & 25-28 SALOC presents "My Fair Lady"
 20 Dance Centre Recital
 20 Douglas Reunion
 21 Spring Bird Mart
 27 & 28 Sonoran Cat Club Show
 31 Teens Against Drugs & Alcohol Lecture & Concert

IT'S A HIGH-FLYIN', FAST MOVIN'

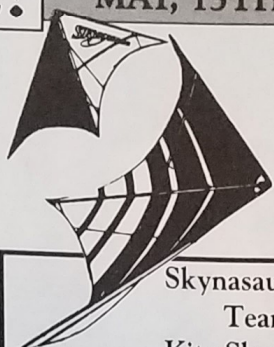
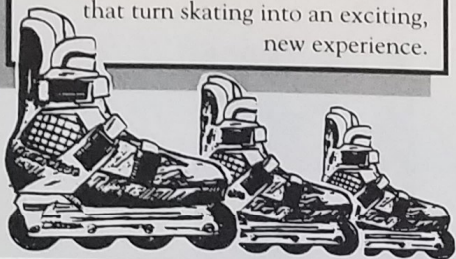
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MAY, 13TH

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From Noon to 4, watch them wheel and glide on the exhilarating in-line skates that turn skating into an exciting, new experience.



Skynasaur Team Kite Show

All day, see the dog-fights, the acrobatics and the stunts of team kite flying presented by Foothills Mall. Stop by SouthRim for all the kites!



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The meeting opens, naturally, with a march on the capitol. That's free. Info, 325-4242.

charity circuit. Tickets and info, 299-3535.

History Fest May 19, 20

Get real in a Willcox celebration of local history that includes a territorial costume contest, retail trade promotion, Western arts & crafts plus tons of food and entertainment. Don't miss the local bazaar. Free. Details and directions, 1-384-2272.

Waiter, There's a Pol in My Soup May 20

The Minority Leadership Development Program, in conjunction with the United Way, sponsors its fourth annual celebrity waiters dinner. Local "stars" (unannounced at press time) serve dinner to guests and compete for tips. All proceeds to the program. Find out who missed their true calling and wins the gold plate award for best service and most gratuities. 6 p.m. at Ventana Canyon Resort. \$50 per person, with celebs donating \$100. Reservations, 323-7625.

Cheer a Volunteer May 20

The Volunteer Center's annual "Rollin' On The River" party at River Center (River Rd. & Craycroft) supplies a large portion of its income and the proceeds assist all of us. Merchants donate goods to be raffled. Lend a hand, spend some bucks. 6 p.m.-10 p.m. Info, 327-6207.

Oracle Festival May 20

The fourth annual Oaks Festival features a parade, fine arts show and sale, craft fair, swap meet, car show, 10k and fun run, calf roping and more. So whether you're a redneck, a y-person, a dentist or a lowrider, there's gotta be something you'll like. Plenty of food, naturally. Free. Begins around 8 a.m. in Oracle. Info, 1-896-9844.

Heavy Metal May 20

The annual razzle-dazzle of the "Silver and Turquoise Ball" is one of Tucson's truly blue-blood, elegant affairs at the Arizona Inn. All proceeds from the black-tie extravaganza benefit the Tucson Festival Society. Buffet dinner... violin music... see who's who on the

Liberal Libations May 21

Whet your suds buds in Sun Sounds annual "Beers of the World" tasting bonanza benefiting Arizona's radio reading service for the blind and print handicapped. More than 35 kinds of brew, plus non-alcoholic beers, seltzers and waters available for those on the wagon. Devour free chicken from Po Folks and TCBY yogurt to offset hunger pangs and clear the palate. Entertainment by the band "Horsefeathers" from 4-7 p.m. Tickets, \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door and \$15 a couple. Info, 881-2111.

Attention, Culture Animals May 24-August '89

The Metropolitan Tucson Convention & Visitors Bureau is coordinating the 1989 Summer Arts Festival. At press time, exact dates weren't established, but you can look forward to myriad arts & cultural events including theater, music, arts exhibits, lectures, children's programs, fiestas and oodles more. Keep an eye out. Info, 624-1817.

Bisbee Fine Arts Festival May 26-June 3

A truckload of art on the walls of the Bisbee Convention Center. Actually, 180-plus pieces of fine art in every medium imaginable will be displayed in the Bisbee School of the Arts member show. Free. Times and directions, 1-432-2141 or 1-432-3397.

Outta This World May 27, June 24

Register fast for this field trip to Biosphere II. In Dec. '89, eight mere mortals will walk into another world, a 2.5-acre, glass-enclosed structure housing a tropical rain forest, desert, savannah, and 35-foot-deep ocean. For two years they'll live and produce their own food and monitor all the cyclical systems of their world. And you think we're kidding, huh? Take the tour with the Tucson Botanical Gardens and eat lunch at the SunSpace Ranch Conference Center. Carpool from the gardens. Register early, the tour is limited. 2150 N. Alvernon. Fee: \$25. Registration, 326-9255.

Gunslinging Dirt May 27-29

Tombstone puts on what it does best: gunfight re-enactments, raucous entertainment and grub. Feel like you cartwheeled back in time. Find out how Wyatt Earp stayed alive. Info, 1-457-3335.

Memorial Day Run May 29

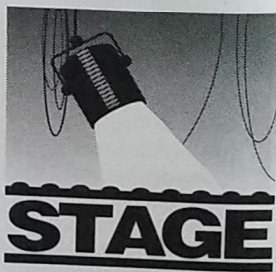
Four-hundred-plus runners converge at Jesse Owens Park to start the seventh annual 8k Memorial Day run and 2-mile fun run, sponsored by the Southern Arizona Roadrunners Club. Be a lean, mean, running machine. 7 a.m. Fee: \$7-\$12. Info, 744-6256.

Luau in Hawaii June 15-22

Last chance to sign up with the Tucson Botanical Gardens in guided tours of Kauai, the garden isle in Hawaii. \$1,195 buys you airfare, deluxe accommodations and education. It also makes you a member of the Tucson Botanical Gardens. Info and registration, Warren/Far West Travel, 886-1331.

Star Wars Through July 18

Watch a movie 4 billion years in the making. Learn why volcanos erupt. Experience earthquakes in action. Fly over the Alps. Explore ancient ruins. Understand Earth's constantly changing land masses in Flandrau Planetarium's show, "Genesis." Tickets and times, 621-4515.



"St. Paul" Apr. 30, May 1

The Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra, an all-volunteer corps dedicated to making beautiful classical sounds, performs with the Tucson Masterworks Chorale and soloists. Scheduled is the oratorio "St. Paul" by Felix Mendelssohn. Apr. 30 at 3 p.m. and May 1 at 8 p.m. in Christ Community Church, 7801 E. Kenyon. Info, 325-7709.

Classic Films

May 1, 2

Original moonwalk dancer Fred Astaire teamed up with the fiery flame-tressed Rita Hayworth in "You Were Never Lovelier" (1942) back when body language said it all and dialogue wasn't littered with profanity. Adm. \$2. Series discounts available. Mon., 5:30 and 8:30 p.m. Tues., 7:30 p.m. in the UA Modern Languages Bldg. Info, 621-1877.

Aged Aquarius

May 5, 6

The Tucson Symphony Orchestra, in its Pops Parade Series, presents "The Fifth Dimension," one of the most popular groups of the '60s and '70s, in a high-pulsed, gem-studded show featuring their top ten hits, including "Up, Up and Away" and "Aquarius." 8 p.m. in TCC Music Hall. Info, 791-4101 or 882-8585.

Arizona Theatre Company Through May 13

"A Walk in the Woods," by Lee Blessing. Two diplomats, American and Soviet, take a series of walks through the complicated landscape of Geneva, where you'll hear private thoughts on the most nuclear issues of our time. Direct from its New York run. At TCC Music Hall. Info, 622-2823.

Tutorial Splendor

May 18-21

Watch mentor-coach-prof Henry Higgins rid Liza Doolittle of her 'ideos Cockney accent to sound like the rich girl next door. "My

Fair Lady" is one of the best musicals ever done, so see it local by the Southern Arizona Light Opera Company. 8 p.m. TCC Music Hall. Tickets, 791-4101.

Toot Your Ancient Flute May 21

Last year, the Tucson Recorder Society had 8 members — now they're 50-strong and growing. They're searching for all closet recorder players, so if you play soprano, alto, tenor or bass, join other musical souls in ensemble exploration of Renaissance, Baroque, Medieval and sometimes modern pieces. They provide the musical scores and refreshments; you provide the instruments and sounds. Free every third Sunday of the month at Sacred Heart Church, 601 E. Ft. Lowell at 1:30 p.m. Info, 327-6283.

Invisible Theatre

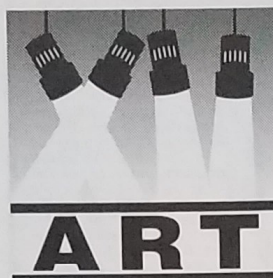
May 24-June 11

The longest running musical ever on Broadway, "The Fantasticks" gives the theater a fantastic season finale. Book and lyrics by Tom Jones, music by Harvey Schmidt. Don't miss this universal theater experience. Times and ticket prices vary. 1400 N. 1st. Ave. Info, 882-9721.

Gaslight Theatre

Through June 10

"The Contender" or "Hope on the Ropes," is an entertaining comedy-musical-melodrama set in the 1920s about an aspiring boxer. Ali with slapstick sting. 7000 E. Tanque Verde. Times and ticket info, 886-9428.



Amerind Foundation Through May

Entitled "Navajo Ways: The Textile Arts 1840-1930," this display follows the history and development of textiles and weavings by the Navajo. Continuing displays include "Dance in Ceremony," tracing the rituals of dance among the Apache, Hopi, Yaqui and Maya peoples. A variety of paintings and sculpture by 19th and 20th century American artists. Adm. charge. Open daily 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Located 65 miles east of Tucson in Dragoon. Info on directions, 1-586-3666.

Ann Original Gallery Through May 6

A group show in oil featuring P.W. Gorman, Marian Tofel and the succulent series of Joanne Garry in watercolors.

May 8-June 17

Third annual Miniature Show displays juried work from around the state and proves that good things come in small frames. Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Sat. 'til 5 p.m. 4811 E. Grant, Suite 153, Crossroads Festival. 323-0266.

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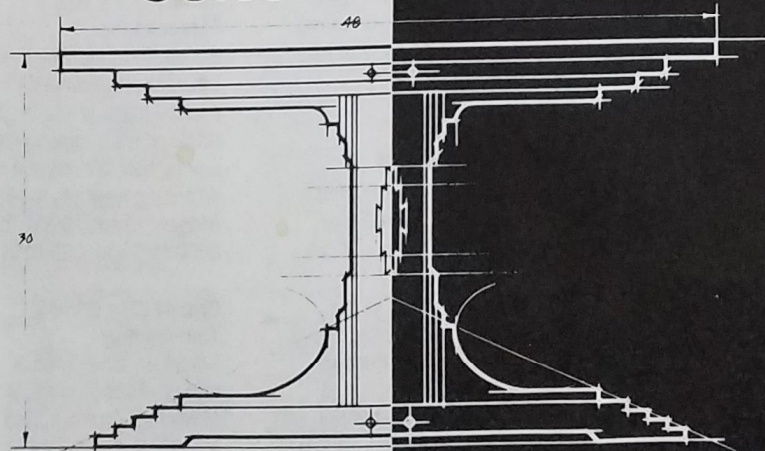
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Congress. 624-7005.

Cabat Studio Through May

Now offering a variety show:
the vibrant color range of Erni
& Rose's contemporary
works. Rose's fired feelies are
like a Southwest sunset;
Erni's whimsical gouache
watercolors are intriguing.
They keep fun hours, so call
ahead. 627 N. 4th Ave.
622-6362.

Center for Creative Photography Through June 9

Explore the new building and
check out photographic
powerhouses in the large
gallery featuring numerous
shows concurrently. "Decade
by Decade" show: works by
20th century famed shooters,
including the rare and classic
works of Ansel Adams.
Sharing the spotlight is
Richard Avedon's (yep, the
guy who managed to get a
constrictor around the
beautiful bod of Nastassia
Kinski) show entitled "Jacob
Israel," plus new visuals in
contemporary Japanese
photography. Just south of
the new pedestrian underpass
on E. Speedway. Metered
parking available. Tues.-Fri.
10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info,
621-7968.

Central Arts Collective Through May 21

The work of Mark Garrett is
on view.

May 24-June 18

Michael Cajero's art is
displayed. These folks always
have something on their walls
that is worth discussing,
debating, loving or hating.
250 E. Congress. Call for
times, 623-5883.

Davis Gallery Through May 13

Specializing in the mod and
abstract, the landscape
paintings of James Cook.

May 16-June 17

A group exhibit of the
gallery's associated artists,
including Greg Benson,
Thomas Chapin, Bruce
McGrew, George Welch and
others. Tues.-Fri., 10 a.m.-5
p.m. Sat., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
6812 N. Oracle. Info,
297-1427.

Desert Artisans Gallery Through June 2

Works in paper by Gertrude
Wait, Patty Mathes, Shirley
Ewell and Anke Van Dun, local
and popular artists. Much of
the work displayed is
representational. Campbell
Village, 3055 N. Campbell.
Daily 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Fri. 'til 8
p.m., Sun. closes at 5 p.m.
323-7405.

Dinnerware Cooperative Through May 21

The 9th annual Invitational
show. Each member invites a
favorite artist to deck the
walls — sort of like an artists'
version of a potluck. Included
are Laurel Hansen, Josh
Goldberg, Lance Patigian,
Alan Huerta and others.
Reception, Apr. 29, 7-9 p.m.
Tues.-Sat., noon-5 p.m.; Sun.,
1-4 p.m. 135 E. Congress.
792-4503.

Eleanor Jeck Gallery Through May

New works, including
"Actions Complementaries"
by James Coignard and "Un
Lot de Joyeuses Affiches," a
suite of nine "magnificent
works" by Max Papart.
Introducing original glass-
works by Robert Sullivan.
Tues.-Sat. 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
6336 E. Broadway. 790-8333.

Etherton/Stern Gallery Through June 10

ASU's Mark Klett exhibits
b&w (and some dye transfers)
20x24" desert landscape
photos. Sharing the show are
Timothy O'Sullivan's b&w
albumin prints of Arizona and
New Mexico scenery long
before modern photographers
got here. O'Sullivan, a
documentary photographer in
the 1870s, did survey work to
show Eastern curiosity
seekers what the Wild West
looked like. Odd Fellows Hall,
135 S. 6th Ave. 624-7370.

Gallery of the Sun Through May

Spotlighting the works of Ted
DeGrazia, his paintings of the
Apache legends and myths.
Some of his middle to later
works, before everyone was
collecting magnets for their
fridges. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.
6300 N. Swan. 299-9191.

Ground Zero Gallery Through May

Where art tends toward the
offbeat. Exhibiting the works
of Michael Chittock, George
Arntz, Billy Blomquist, Dan
Goldberg and Roger Alan. The
stuff seems to always be busy
and brightly colored. 222 E.
Congress. Tues.-Fri., noon-4

La Artista
HAIR STUDIO

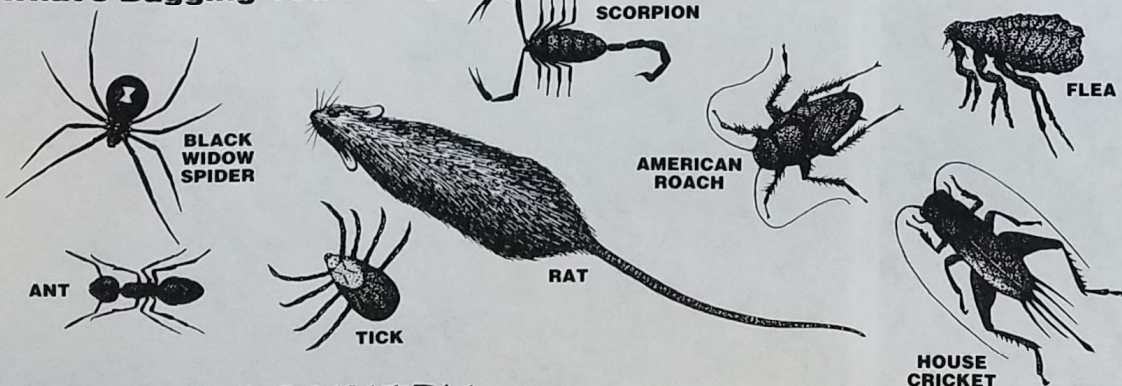
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p.m. Sat., 7-10 p.m. Also by appt. Info, 624-5106.

John Doe Through May
Another gallery is taking a chance on Congress Street and the owner is still seeking visual and performance artists who want the world to see what their souls are creating. Meanwhile, Milton Perrin displays his contemporary oils — political in nature, kinda shocking. Actually, they're about *meat*. 210 E. Congress. Look for surprises, you find surprises. Info, 798-3611.

Mary Peachin's Art Company Through May
It's critter month at the gallery... dig through rows of prints and lithographs and posters featuring coyotes, snakes, rabbits, porcupines and other desert animals at 3955 E. Speedway. Info, 881-1311, or visit her gallery in the lobby of the Sheraton El Conquistador.

Museum of Northern Arizona Through May 19
Things ought to be leafing out up there — a nice time to see "A Separate Vision: Capstone Exhibit," addressing issues facing contemporary Native American artists. Photos, text and video accompany work by Baje Whitethorne, Navajo printer; John Fredericks, Hopi Kachina carver; Brenda Spencer, Navajo weaver; and more. Funded through a grant from the Flinn Foundation. Open daily, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Adm. charge. Route 4, Flagstaff. 1-774-5211.

Beth O'Donnell Gallery, Ltd. Through May 8
N. Skreko Martin's in the spotlight gallery with her landscape translations — think of the large brush strokes of impressionism with a dash of art deco thrown in with sizzling colors. Better yet, go see. Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m. St. Philip's Plaza, River and Campbell. 299-6998.

Obsidian Gallery May 1-26
Colorful earthenware by Steven Schrepfermen, a well-known Colorado potter. If that doesn't get you, there's a bunch of ceramic toys with wheels on them... tons of stuff done in clay... Where art is fun. 4340 N. Campbell, Suite 90. Mon.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. 577-3598.

Philabaum Glass Studio & Gallery Through May
See large, off-hand glass blowing. Watch them work in a maze of color. New works also. Where glass doesn't mean windows. 711 S. 6th Ave. Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-4 p.m. or by appt. 884-7404.

Rancho Linda Vista Through May 5
Artist Sharon Brady displays her multi-media work at the artists' colony of Rancho Linda Vista Barn Gallery. Info on times, 896-9401.

Rosequist Galleries
Paintings, drawings, prints, etc. of the Southwest, ranging from the traditional to the innovative. Representing more than 53 artists, the gallery offers some kind of art for all kinds of sensibilities. 1615 E. Ft. Lowell. Tues.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m. 327-5729.

Runes Gallery
Another new kid on the block, a gallery devoted to eclectic artwork. Look for paintings, photos and sculptures and anything that grabs the fancy. Tiny and funky, it shows locals and nationals. Lately there have been relief collages. Better yet, check out the sculpture in their restaurant next door. 258 E. Congress. Sat.-Sun., noon-4 p.m., then by appt. 792-4354.

Sanders Galleries
Richard Iams, Jim Norton, Buck McCain and Larry Riley exhibit traditional Western oil paintings. 6420 N. Campbell Ave. 299-1763.

Settler's West
Focusing on traditional Western art — lots of cowboys and Indians in oil, plus bronze statues capturing heroes of the Old West. 6420 N. Campbell Ave. 299-2607.

St. Francis in the Foothills Through May
Entitled "A Personal View: Refugees of Central America." The photographic works of Harvey Finkle are sponsored by the Tucson Ecumenical Council Legal Assistance and the Arizona Area Office of the American Friends Service Committee to educate and enlist all of us in finding solutions to the growing issue of Central American refugees in the U.S. These photos will test your social consciousness. By appt only. 299-9063.

St. Philip's In The Hills May 7-June 1
Virginia Ames' watercolors on paper and Barbara Tregonis' portraits share the spotlight in the church gallery. Reception, May 7, 2-4 p.m. Campbell and River. Tues. and Thurs. 2-4 p.m. or by appt. 299-6421.

Tohono Chul Park Through May 29
Sandy Schofield Smith's photos of nearby petroglyphs; a visual legacy from prehistoric Indians who left magical

symbols in stone.
Through June 4
A juried exhibition featuring works in clay, metal, glass, fiber and wood by Arizona designer craftsmen. \$2 donation requested for all shows. 7366 N. Paseo del Norte. 742-6455.

Tucson Museum of Art Through May 14
"Exhibition-Primavera: A Celebration of Women in the Arts." Continuing its annual support and participation,

TMA plays host to this well known (and well done) women's art and jazz festival with an exhibition of artwork in the Campbell Gallery.
Through June 11
Their display of kimonos is called "An Expression of Inner Harmony." These silk wonders are too beautiful to wear so they hang them on the wall. Leave it to the exporters of Sony and Toyota to create clothes that make you look good *inside*. 140 N. Main Ave. Tues., 10 a.m.-9

p.m. Wed.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sun., 1-5 p.m. Adm. charge. 624-2333.

Street Art Through May 31
Stroll downtown through Scott and Congress Streets and you'll find huge "things": bronzes, woodcarvings, assemblages and earthworks. It's part of Tucson Sculpture '89, an outdoor exhibition to stimulate the public's interest in art. Give your eyeballs a roll. Stuff is happening all

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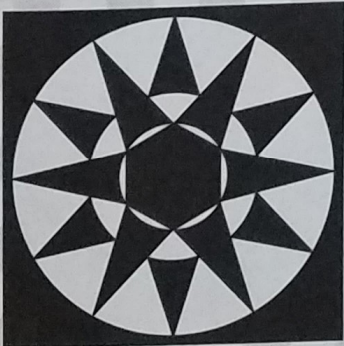


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Rene Leogrande
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hours. 621-3546.

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May 15-June 1

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EAT

DINING OUT OF TOWN

Beware Middle America and dark, heavy furniture

BY LAWRENCE W. CHEEK



Max Cannon

I've been an idiot, so I probably deserve these morose meatballs and soggy spaghetti puddled on the plate in front of me. I'm in Los Angeles working on a TV script, and to save money I haven't rented a car. That's right — I'm the only living creature in La-La Land without wheels.

Marooned in a Howard Johnson's at the dinner hour, I had asked the desk clerk, the only native I could find, if he knew of a decent restaurant in walking distance. "Everybody says Malebocca's is good," he said. "It's about a mile down the street."

I knew instinctively that Malebocca's was not good the minute I opened the door, but I was on foot, it was dark, and there wasn't anything else in the neighborhood. The menu was what you'd have found in an "Ital-

ian" restaurant in Omaha thirty years ago: five shapes of pasta in tomato goo, meatballs, sausage, pizza, etc. And now, midway through the meal, I've learned that they don't even make these standards with any verve. Also, the chianti is ice-cold, and the service is sullen.

On the way out, I mention at least the latter to the owner. She's a charmer. "You don't like it, you don't have to eat here," she says.

That was my Worst Restaurant Experience of '88, and as in most years, it happened on the road, in a strange city. That's how it goes among foodies who travel frequently. Foraging for a good restaurant in Bisbee or LA when you don't have any inside dope is as fraught with uncertainty as flying Air

Afghan.

Over the years, however, you develop strategies to improve the odds. Many of them are best expressed in the negative: for example, never eat where signs boast, "Rotary Club Meets Here." Or "Chinese and American Food." (Why would a chef want to supplement the menu with American food if his Chinese stuff is any good?) Cute restaurant names also are a tip-off that ambiance, not food, may be tying up the management's attention — although you have to admire the Los Angeles chef who named his upscale French restaurant "La Poubelle," which means "The Garbage Can."

How do other food writers manage on the road? Colette Bancroft, restaurant critic for *The Arizona Daily Star*, offers a tip that I now appreciate. "Never ask a desk clerk," she tells me. "They'll say, 'It's great; all the college kids eat there.' Well, I probably would have eaten there when I was in college, too. But not now."

In big cities, Bancroft looks for guidebooks written by serious restaurant critics. In small towns, she cruises, looking for places that "look interesting, smell good, and where the parking lots seem full of local cars — not tourists." If a restaurant has posted its menu outside, she considers that a good sign: it not only gives prospective customers a better feel for what they'll get inside; it also suggests that the owner has confidence in what he's offering.

"And never," she adds, "eat where the cops eat."

Laurie Pew, who was Tucson's first restaurant critic (at the *Tucson Citizen*, 1978-84), says she sometimes calls the critic at the local paper for recommendations. And she checks city magazines — for places to avoid. "City magazines are notoriously puffy in those little restaurant capsules they all run, but there are certain key words in them that should warn you off — for example, 'happy hour' or 'family restaurant.'"

Other ominous signs? "If you look inside the door and see a lot of dark, heavy furniture," Pew says, not joking. "Or if you're in Middle America and someone mentions an Italian restaurant and says, 'my mother-in-law eats there, and she's Italian.' Why should being Italian automatically qualify someone as an authority on Italian cooking? How many American mothers-in-law do you know who are first-rate American cooks?"

Steven Weiss, the restaurant critic for *New Times* in Phoenix, has found some national guides useful — particularly "Where to Eat in America." He doesn't bother with the better-known Mobil and Travel-Holiday guides. "I think there are a lot of dinosaurs in there," he says, and he's right. Unlike Bancroft and me, he's had good experiences with desk clerks and concierges.

"Hotels are in the hospitality business, and if the management is at all savvy, they'll see that their guests are given good advice." Talk for awhile with Weiss, though, and you begin to suspect that he's hanging around a better class of hotels than I am.

What about small towns? "I'm not one of those people who's absolutely against chain restaurants," he says. "Sometimes going with the devil you know is the lesser of evils. And anyway, you shouldn't expect to be pleased 100 percent of the time."

"I was in this little town near Canyon de Chelly, where there's just one choice, a kind of truck stop-cafe. At the middle of the dinner hour, they start Pine Sol-ing the floor! At that point you either become an obnoxious snob, or you laugh and just consider it anecdotal material. The wonderful thing about eating is that you always get to do it again tomorrow."

Calvin Trillin of *The New Yorker* spends a good deal of time in America's backwaters, and has refined his ideas. "If the town is too small to have a McDonald's, there are generally some pretty good places to eat lunch," he says. "I've noticed that when the McDonald's comes in, it will put them out of business."

How to find those places? First, stick with regional and ethnic specialties, Trillin says. And yes, ask the desk clerk. "But don't ask him where he took his parents for their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Ask him where he'd go if he just got back home after thirteen months in Korea."

My own guideline for dining out in America, which strikes some people as appallingly snotty but which actually is rooted in solid cultural anthropology, is to never eat in a town of under 250,000 population, unless it's in a state with a seacoast. The reason is that our big cities and coastal regions are where certain immigrant groups tend to cluster — Vietnamese, Indians, Mexicans, Hungarians, et al — and they're simply more interesting cooks. Small-town Middle America is peopled largely with the descendants of British, Germans and Scandinavians. These are the people who gave us the meatloaf.

There are exceptions, of course. Most small towns in Arizona and New Mexico have a good Mexican place. Flagstaff used to have a terrific Czech restaurant — driven out of business, no doubt, by McDonald's; Flagstaff's that kind of town. And there sure isn't any guarantee of eating well just because you've stopped in a big city.

So the advice, in summary: do your homework and think ethnic. Beware pretensions, tourists, cops and Scandinavians. When in LA, Denver, or Houston, don't be a hostage — rent a car. Driving from here to San Diego? Pack a lunch. □

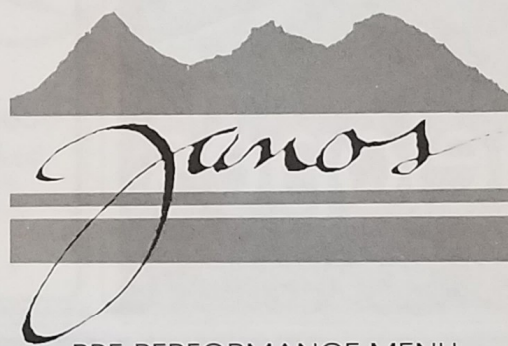
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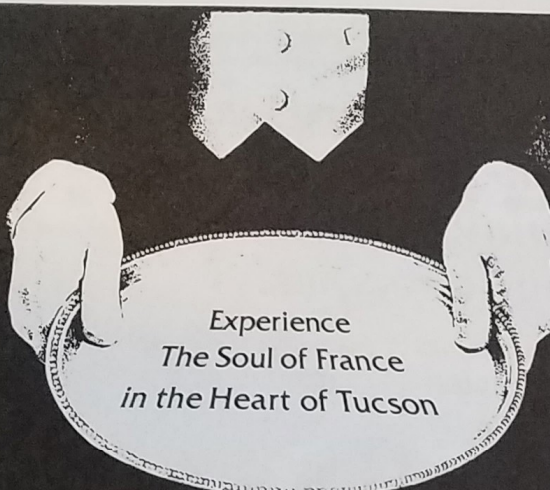
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Nu REVUES

Painted Desert 3055 N. Campbell

It's Blueberry Night, apparently, at this pleasant and innovative nouvelle Southwestern restaurant recently relocated to high-rent digs on North Campbell Avenue. Practically all the desserts du jour use them in some form, and so does one of the seafood specials: orange roughy in a beurre blanc, almond, wine and blueberry sauce. This seems just to the right of bizarre, but there probably was a time when duck à l'orange seemed weird, too.

Our jury tries the orange roughy special, and the verdict is mixed. One pronounces it "great"; another stops with "daring." The most perceptive reaction: "It would be better as an appetizer — the unfamiliar clash of flavors is intriguing at first, but it doesn't wear that well."

No dissent over anything else on the table, though. Among the starters, a chicken and cilantro soup is rich and peppery; and an angel hair pasta with asparagus, bell peppers and cream sauce is stunning. The secret: fresh tomato bits serving as a bridge to link all the flavors together. An entree of chicken breast with pecans and goat cheese cream sauce has a delicate blend of flavors, while the textures of the three ingredients — respectively smooth, crunchy and grainy — provide contrast.

Everyone's favorite, however, is the grilled scallops wrapped in blue corn tortillas with an aggressively fiery cream sauce. So many of Painted Desert's trendy competitors strive to seem intrepid while serving dishes whose tastes are quite tepid — they're fearful, apparently, of scaring away the snowbird flock.

Painted Desert's prices may scare other potential diners away; our bill for four totalled \$129 plus tip — and that was with extremely modest imbibing. The lunch menu is very reasonable, however, with entrees ranging from \$4.95 (apple and Edam quesadilla) to \$9.95 (salmon with Arizona sunset sauce).

Lunch Mon.-Fri. from 11:30; dinner Mon.-Sat. from 5:30. Personal checks and credit cards accepted. 885-5310.
— El Paso

Catalina Cafe 5605 E. River Road

"The latest in Bimmer burger bars" is the way a friend described the Catalina Cafe in River Center at River and Craycoft. Owners Michael Perry Ladin and Fred Genth, formerly of the famous frat bar "Dirtbag's," seem to have outgrown their college clientele and moved to the foothills in search of a yupscale crowd. Judging from all the BMWs, Porsches and Benzes in the parking lot, they've succeeded in attracting precisely the folks they want.

The restaurant is tucked into a small complex of shops featuring a cobblestone sidewalk and illuminated waterfall. Neon signs give off a nice nocturnal effect as they reflect off the mauve and violet walls. Once inside, Ladin himself greeted us (nice touch). He seemed to take a personal interest in his diners. It was late in the evening and crowded, but I was also impressed with how quickly they were able to accommodate us, considering the six people in our party.

The menu includes omelettes, burgers, sandwiches and salads, as well as an eclectic range of entrees. The Catalina Fajita, a breast of chicken cut into strips and grilled with peppers and onions served over a bed of homemade salsa along with wild rice, had just enough of a hint of mesquite smoke and spice to give my taste buds tango lessons.

A dining companion chose the fresh fish of the day, tilapia, an Arizona-grown white meaty fish. It was marinated in cilantro lime butter, then broiled and served with fresh veggies. She loved it.

Others in the party who were concerned about their waistlines and eating so late in the evening enjoyed the soups, salads, and light sandwiches. The char-broiled chicken breast served on a Kaiser with the house's Catalina Sauce edged

toward nouvelle territory; the sauce seemed to mate dijon and honey.

The restaurant is designed so it can accommodate both an intimate dinner for two with corner window tables overlooking the city lights, and a cocktail crowd in the mood for appetizers and people-watching. It's also a great retreat at the end of a night on the town.

Omelettes and sandwiches from \$4.25 to \$5.75; dinner entrees \$7.25-\$13.95. Breakfast, lunch and dinner every day, 7 a.m.-10 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.; 7 a.m.-midnight Fri.-Sun. Personal checks and credit cards.

— T-Bone

Tony Roma's A Place For Ribs 4620 North Oracle

Back East, where I came from, barbecue meant hot suburban afternoons and dads slipping on white aprons to spend the afternoon slaving over grills, nonchalantly flipping hunks of meat for the family (and neighbors and cousins). The coals were ignited with lighter fluid; the burgers, ribs, chicken or steaks were all dunked in some corn-syrupy sauce; and everything always came out the color of burnt sienna and tasting the same. Only ketchup and mustard came to the rescue. *Real* barbecue has always been something that I thought only Southerners and Creoles owned the rights to — like it was their language and no one else could comprehend it.

Now Tucson has Tony Roma's. If you haven't been here, you should; if you have, you'll keep coming back.

The decor is barely noticeable. Plush maroon booths are flanked by maroon tables. Thick emerald carpeting covers the floor and brass railings are placed throughout the restaurant. In the background is plenty of wood (including a full bar) and low, yellowish lighting. Yes, it's comfortable, yes, it's Texas-woody, but there's no *soul*. It looks just about like every other new fancy but down-home diner.

My boyfriend and I stopped by for lunch — he's the least finicky eater I know — and decided on burgers and chicken wings. Ribs would follow as a dinner take-out to feed two teenage stomachs.

The cheeseburger (\$3.45) was too well done, and just a typical burger, though the plate was graced with non-greasy shoestring fries dusted with herbs. My boyfriend chowed on Buffalo chicken wings (\$3.75) served in a barbecue sauce so spicy that it singed his tongue. (He resorted to dipping them in the cool bleu cheese dressing.) The place was jammed and the waitresses hustling, but they managed friendly and efficient service. If it hadn't been so busy, I would have pleaded with the waitress to bring me a different burger. But they had been open barely a week, and I don't think they anticipated being packed with a line that snaked out the door.

Tony's ribs were voted the '88-'89 "Best Ribs in America" champs in the National Ribs Cook-Off, sponsored by an industrial meat packing house. But *which* ribs? The menu includes Original Baby Backs (choice lean U.S. ribs cut from tenderloin); St. Louis Style (spare ribs, tender and meaty); Carolina Honeys (tender pork ribs basted in a new barbecue sauce made with honey and molasses); Bountiful Beef (juicy and big); and a sampler of all the above. We ordered two full slabs (\$11.95 each, one slab feeding two normal-sized humans). One was the Original Baby Backs and the other St. Louis Style. They were so tender they melted in the mouth, with a real barbecue taste that wasn't burnt; a touch sweet without that syrupy taste. Along for the ride came spicy ranch-style pinto beans (your choice of baked potato or fries if beans aren't your thing); cole slaw that is on the tangy side; and small soft rolls that are standard white wonder plaster. But the bread didn't matter. Everyone gnawed until only parched white bones were left — and they went to the dog.

Tony Roma's is a franchise operation with 135 outlets scattered from Japan to England and across the United States. (Tucson manager Ralph Turner says a second Tucson outlet will open on the East Side in about six months.) To protect its secrets, every employee must sign a legal document promising no loose lips about the recipes.

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DESERT NOTES

Runes owner Warren Sonberg says elderly people are the most comfortable in his weird new East Congress Street place, because they've been on the planet a long time. Perhaps with age comes a sense of ease with the abnormal, or maybe it's the second childhood syndrome. You could picture Don Ameche and the rest of the retirement gang from "Cocoon" romping through this place in unabashed delight. Perhaps this is a foretaste of what Heaven is like — it's too chilly for that other place.

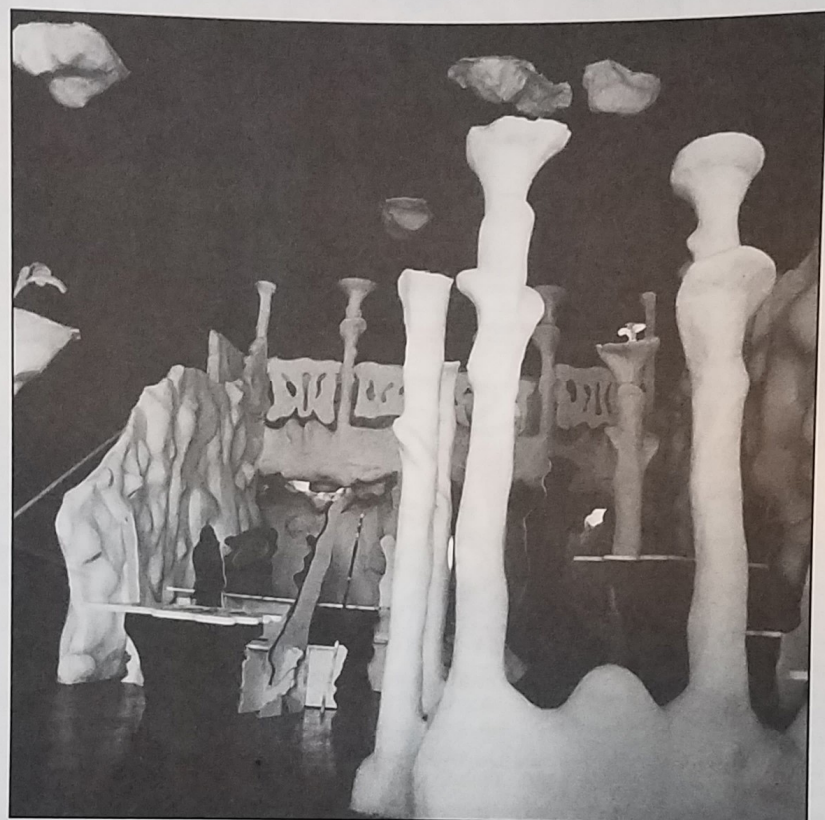
Sonberg's point is that this new East Congress restaurant that's causing all the clucking is not just for the young and hip, or for the downtown poseurs. Nor is it just for the hungry. Runes is more of an *environment* than a cafe, a restaurant that draws as many gawkers as diners.

And it's a disconcerting environment. White plaster spires bathed in an eerie phosphorescent glow make you feel like you have caromed back into a black-light poster from the sixties. With \$50,000 and three tons of plaster of Paris, Sonberg has created an atmosphere of writhing human shapes that suggests a polite orgy taking place on the walls. It's plaster sex, the ultimate in safety. If we can't Do It anymore with strangers, here we can at least be voyeurs as mutated forms imitate our primal urges.

Sonberg explains Runes' interior design on the menu: "Runes are mysterious ancient symbols believed to possess magical qualities. Used in secret rituals of powerful significance to the pagan world, I find today a sudden urgency to reach out to these sources of original unchangeable wisdom." Translation: Runes pushes the formerly avant-garde Cafe Magritte and B&B's into the mainstream — in terms of art, if not food.

Settle first into dark blue and white tables and chairs that resemble puzzle parts jutting in random directions. Will I get stabbed if I bump into a table? (Don't worry, they're all well sanded, painted and extremely heavy. And surprisingly, the stiff-backed chairs cradle the body. Comfy.) Then relax. Let the eyes roam the strange white forms. Gradually, they reveal themselves as highly stylized, distorted human figures and body parts in whimsical, gymnastic, erotic and other fanciful poses.

Plaster people appear ready to walk through the walls, buttocks loom big and round, arms look broken, legs seem borrowed, heads peek in all directions. Long limbs are entwined



Laura Greenberg

PLASTER SEX

East Congress Street is getting serious about weirdness

with short ones. Bodies are locked in powerful embraces. Misery and love collide. Every patron is welcome to fill in the blanks, composing his own story.

The place is an ever-changing museum. During the day, when white shutters — cut into oversized puzzle shapes — are open and the air rushes in through the screenless front panels, cars whiz by and sunlight splashes across the erotic sculpture garden. At dusk, manager Beau Sonberg, Warren's brother, says the entire front of the environment glows red from the setting sun. At night, it's black-light time.

Says Warren Sonberg of first-time customers: "With Runes, the feeling they feel is, one, shock; two, a degree of disorientation; three, after those two things and they sit down and order something, the response is they feel peaceful. And they start to look at the work and see things in it, and see it for their own."

He says runes actually were mystical Nordic poetry and cryptic signs used to invoke magical incantations (which appealed to his Swedish heri-

tage). His sculptures are his attempt to give form to such notions — he compares them to three-dimensional, Rinso-white Rorschachs. And they certainly do evoke incantations.

People have a wide array of reactions. One young woman lunching at Runes said she felt she had stepped into Dr. Seussland and should meditate in a dark room or go climb a mountain afterwards. An adult patron said she felt so uncomfortable she wasn't about to order anything more daring than a glass of milk. My first visit there took away my urge to eat, though my partner wolfed down a Greek salad with no problems. The food, at any rate, isn't the point here. Sonberg is an artist, and his idea is this: instead of selling tickets for people to see his work, he sells food.

It was the East Congress scene that attracted Sonberg, a forty-year-old New Jersey sculptor, to Tucson. He says he scoured the country looking for the proper place to show his work (and, incidentally, to get out of New Jersey). Listen to this, headhunters: Tucson's thin sliver of downtown craziness beat out San Francisco and

Seattle. Sonberg also thought it was nice we still had some natural environment left that wasn't paved.

While the suits at City Hall debate economic development and mutter vaguely about an arts district, there has been a quiet rebellion going on off their bow. West Congress is conspiring to be a heart suitable for a real city — four short blocks of it, at least — with the richness of eclecticism and fun that only poverty and official neglect can create. What Club Congress begat some years ago by transforming a transients' taproom into a bar-hopping activists' nightspot, has finally developed into a decent stretch of nifty and new galleries featuring dangerous ideas, a couple of restaurants where french dip isn't the highlight of the menu, and still more than that, a promise. A promise that downtown Tucson will be reborn as Greenwich Village, and not Scottsdale. Everywhere there are good signs. Downtown has lured a big hitter like Ether-ton/Stern Gallery. Dinnerware is dug in, and while ventures like Ground Zero may be struggling like all pink newborns, the punchy-colored paintings on exhibit there spike curiosity. Just recently I stuck my head into the John Doe Gallery and saw two framed pieces of multi-media artwork and an expensive bicycle in the corner. Art or transportation? (We'll never know; the owner was fast asleep.) This is not to say that such a wonderful institution as Wig-O-Rama doesn't fit in — precisely the opposite if we are to have a true arts district. Those decapitated plastic heads with fake hair, eyes and puckered lips should be declared a national monument, or at least a historic landmark.

Runes, at 258 E. Congress, is open from 11 a.m. until midnight Tuesday through Thursday and until 3 a.m. Friday and Saturday. Remember, if you're used to Dunkin' Donuts and fluorescent light, there may be a discomfort level to deal with here. A photographer from *Architectural Digest* suggested the place needed more warmth to invoke hunger as well as incantations, and Sonberg isn't done yet. When Runes is finished, its interior will be a total environment completely encased in plaster relief, including the twenty-five-foot-high ceilings (now sort of a soothing navy blue). He even dreams of a chain of sculpted, cave-like environments strung across the land from Manhattan to San Francisco — a national Runic community.

— Laura Greenberg

PIMA

*Sometim
most tin*

It's a beautiful alinas ex currently desert. The tilt brushing my daggers, and red-tailed hawk ferent to agave pear for a hand

I'm off route to be anywhere whack route B an hour ago. A off. Still, I think into the gully puncturing so

Gibson, m he has to be i feet above Fin low Finger Ro in a sea of shin you find the ground between a field of ther steps or so. Bu it snowed last with water, co choose the sm square in the r as possible; he into your shin

This is the thing — plant you. A proverb stone in the lo Sometimes you whacks you. I tr hard to stay or been speared strategized ove minute I took r about halfway bad enough, th finger's swelling the worms in m

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Later I mee slab below Fin mammal. A lit figure out just where are the f This is a lib

PIMA CANYON

*Sometimes you whack the bush,
most times the bush whacks you*

BY LARRY WINTER

It's a beautiful winter day everywhere in the Catalinas except for the two or three cubic yards I currently occupy. My part is stuffed with steep desert. The tilt is about forty-five degrees. A cholla is brushing my right leg. My boots are buried in shindaggers, and next I have to climb over a fat agave. A red-tailed hawk glides by, intent on breakfast, indifferent to agaves. I'm considering using a prickly pear for a handhold.

I'm off route. Not just off trail — I never meant to be anywhere near one — I'm even off the bush-whack route Bob Gibson and I carefully mapped out an hour ago. About two miles and a major drainage off. Still, I think the day is salvageable if I can just get into the gully that leads up to Finger Rock without puncturing something vital.

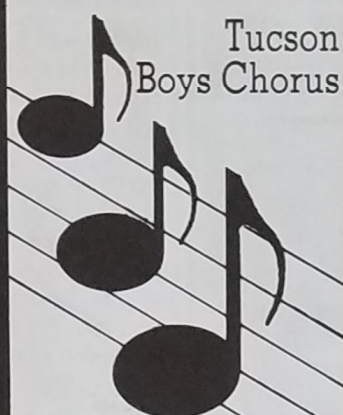
Gibson, my fellow penitent, is out of sight, but he has to be in the same predicament: a thousand feet above Finger Rock Canyon, a thousand feet below Finger Rock, on the way to Pima Canyon, awash in a sea of shindaggers. Most places and most times you find the daggers spaced with a little bare ground between them. Then you can tiptoe through a field of them and only get stabbed every dozen steps or so. But not here, not today. It's January 29th, it snowed last Friday, and dagger points, swollen with water, cover the slope. The basic move today is: choose the smallest plant in the neighborhood; step square in the middle of it, flattening as many points as possible; hope only a few insinuate themselves into your shins. Don't fall.

This is the desert primeval. To survive, everything — plant, rock, critter — is prepared to hurt you. A proverb inscribed in hieroglyphs on a huge stone in the loneliest corner of Pima Canyon reads: *Sometimes you whack the bush, most times the bush whacks you.* I try to observe its implications, but it's hard to stay on constant alert. For instance, I've just been speared by the agave. I saw it, worried and strategized over it. All the same, it poked me the minute I took my eyes off it. Now a spine is sticking about halfway through my finger, and if that's not bad enough, the damned things are poisonous. My finger's swelling up with the same alkaloids that kill the worms in mescal. The worms are happier.

The first time we hiked in the Catalinas, Bob and I were thirteen. It was 1961. His mom dropped us off at the end of Magee Road, and during a long afternoon we wandered up to the first set of pools in Pima Canyon. We found a dead coyote pup at the foot of the little dam. It had fallen on an agave and died with a spine poking out of its gut. I make the move over the current agave without dying or grabbing the prickly pear of falling face first into the dagger patch.

Later I meet Gibson sunning himself on a stone slab below Finger Rock. He looks like a lost marine mammal. A little tubby, a little dazzled, trying to figure out just which wave dropped him here. And where are the fish?

This is a likely spot for echoes, so we test it. My



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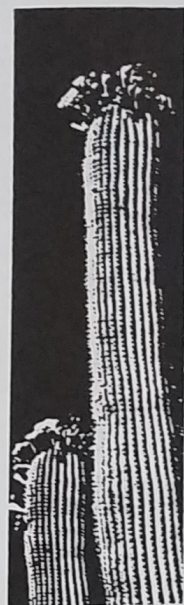
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NOTES

friends and I used to imitate animal cries when screaming in the mountains, but these days we settle for anything loud and strange. A good shriek raises three or four echoes here, so pretty soon we have the canyon reverberating with screams, groans, hoots and whistles. For good measure Gibson concludes with half a dozen blasts of his favorite war cry, "Eee-ya-keeeeee!". All this caterwauling is too much for some Helpful Soul on the Kimball Peak trail about two miles and a day's walk away. "Do you need..." he shouts, but the rest is drowned out by echoes of "Eee-ya-keeeeee" bouncing from us to the Breadloaf across the way, to Kimball Peak, to Finger Rock, to Tucson, to the moon. "Jeez", the Helpful Soul probably whispered to his partner, "Do you think a walrus just died up there?"

We're not going to Finger Rock today. Instead we plan to swing

cave in completely. This time John had spent half an hour frantically nailing himself to the cliff, preparing for a titanic dump. Directly above me. Now he was deep into his labor, hanging in stirrups, using a plastic bag to catch a fraction of his product. About as effective as a blind man at shortstop. For the only time in my life I wanted a helmet. And an umbrella. As I hung there, two dirt bikers rode up to Golder's truck and stole all our spare gear. I had just enough light to see every move they made from my perch a mile away. The sunset was spectacular until it started to snow.

This should also help to put things in perspective: Last December Louis Hock, Gibson and I traversed from the north side of Table Mountain into Pima Canyon. To do that we left Gibson's car at the mouth of Pima Canyon and Hock's at the end of a new road in La Reserve. Pretty soon we won't be

You can get killed, hurt or at least scared doing stuff like this, but there are more urban ways to die in the Catalinas. Back in 1978 or '79 my friend Norman Godfrey was murdered in Pima Canyon. One starry night a stranger beat him to death while he slept.

through the saddle east of it and drop down a steep chute into upper Pima Canyon. Of course the chute might not go, and if it doesn't, we'll have to climb back and either descend the route we just came up, or more likely, try something equally hideous somewhere else. I don't know why, but it's a law of bushwhacking that you should never retrace your steps unless there is absolutely no alternative. Why pass up a chance to get scraped by something new? I take off my t-shirt — it's soaked — and pull on a dry one. In the process I expose half of today's wounds. Gibson says, "Un hermano de la sangre." I mutter, "El más chingado."

"Bob, there's just one thing I don't understand about this climbing," Gibson's grandmother once grilled him, "What's it getcha?" Here's what she meant. When we were just out of high school, another friend of ours, John Golder, and I tried a technical climb on a dome near Sutherland Wash. As night rolled around I was hanging in a belay seat a couple of rope lengths above the desert and still way below the top. At that moment Golder began to rain turds upon my head. His guts always have been a leaking gasworks on the verge of collapse, rumbling and clanking, threatening disaster, but giving plenty of warning before they

able to do the walk we made that day — it'll be reserved for rich guys. As non-rich guys, we had to sneak around the guardhouse at La Reserve. We scrambled under the north face of Table Mountain, past the Cherry Jam and the Crescent Crack, up to a little saddle just east of the main face. From there we scoped out the chute at the back of Finger Rock, the one Gibson and I are on today. Later we dropped down into Pima Canyon and marched out. Uneventful, except by the time we got back to La Reserve we were so wasted that Hock backed his car over a cliff.

So sometimes this climbing gets you just a long walk and a hefty towing bill at the end of a hard day. Other times it gets you a face full of John Golder.

At the saddle east of Finger Rock, Bob and I look over at Table Mountain. Today things on the mountain, at least, are a little tougher than they were that day with Hock. In the first place the chute at the back of Finger Rock faces north, so it's still choked with Friday's snow. At least the cold has frozen the scree into something with a consistency more like putty than like the usual conglomeration of loose marbles. But it's a narrow slot we're in, and we still have to wade through the creepers, cat's claws and

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downed timber that fill it to overflowing. Every so often a big glob of snow drops from an overhanging branch and slides down my back. Helps to focus my attention on the minor indignities of the moment.

The brush is so thick that there are stretches of fifteen or twenty feet where we don't touch ground at all. Just tiptoe from branch to trunk to rotten log. In places the chute is maybe a dozen feet across and thirty feet deep. A little ribbon of shadow and ice falling from Finger Rock down the back of Prominent Peak, surrounded by bright desert. The ice is slick too, and maybe to prove the point, Gibson slips at the gully's crux. He gives a great imitation of the coyote in a Roadrunner cartoon. Comes to a screeching halt at the last possible moment, fingernails dug into the ice, belly hung over a cliff, bloodshot eyes popped out about six inches. The cliff in question is maybe twenty feet high with a bottom that's a pure meatgrinder: a mess of sharp stones on about a sixty-degree slope.

You can get killed, hurt or at least scared doing stuff like this, but there are more urban ways to die in the Catalinas. Back in 1978 or '79 my friend Norman Godfrey was murdered in Pima Canyon. One starry night a stranger beat him to death while he slept. I still carry a note from Norman in my wallet — directions to his new cabin in Prescott. On a raw day in early spring I watched Norman's dad scatter his son's ashes at the canyon's mouth. Mr. Godfrey could barely stand, he was so hurt, and the wind was so strong and cold. He swayed on the edge of the void. Since then, when I go to Pima Canyon I think of Norman and his dad, and my own little boy and girl, and my mom who has never once seen me off without warning me to be careful.

After Gibson wriggles away from the edge of the cliff his macho comes back strong. Now he wants to jump down. I point out that he just gave up a perfectly good chance to dive off the cliff, but if he really wants to hurt himself, we should do the job right and first tie a creeper around his neck. Then I can tie the other end to a log and give him a push.

After we downclimb the cliff — uneventfully — the gully unfolds itself. Just pops right out into the desert. The slope becomes so steep and so open that descending it is like dropping out of space straight to the heart of the canyon. We drift down to a little pool hidden in a draw. A Japanese gardener might have invented it on a day when his zen was perfect. Two boulders, one large, the other small, black and white, sit in the middle of the pool. It's fed by a little waterfall, and the whole thing is framed by a

backdrop of rushes. Birds bathe in the shadow of a sycamore.

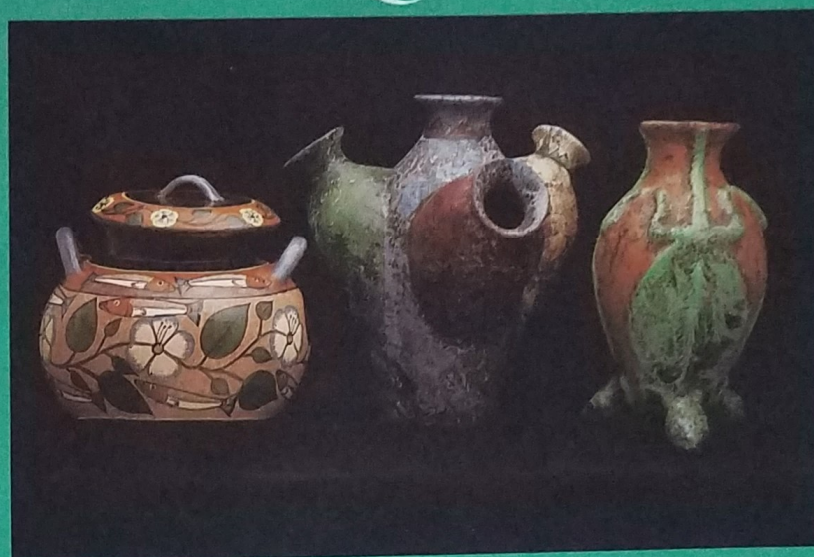
Like the stream, we meander down slabs of rock, obeying the laws of gravity and the imperative of sore feet. After a while we strike the trail. It's late afternoon, we're a mile or so above Coyote Pup Pool and the canyon is golden. Long winter shadows throw side canyons into deep relief. Fields of agaves and saguaros flow down the canyon, showing us the way. We ponder Pima Canyon, huge as it rolls toward Tucson.

When we get to Coyote Pup Pool we run into the first strangers of the day. Two UA undergrads are surveying plants near the pool. They've run a transect line across a gully and are down on their hands and knees trying to identify every plant on the line. I used to do this kind of thing myself so I want to talk about it, but I can't remember the name of a single plant they're working on. They want to know where we're coming from so we tell them, "back of the canyon." We all look back. A hawk rises on a thermal to scout dinner.

One of the kids asks me, "How far back can you go in here?" I'm tempted to say thirty years. Instead I tell him two or three miles of good trail lead to the upper spring. But the trail is lots longer than that. It connects the hawk I saw this morning to the one that rises above me now; winds through the ice chute to Finger Rock and the agave that speared me; then loops back through a hundred other trips to start at 1961. In this exact spot two boys who were Gibson and me poked at the carcass of a dead coyote pup to discover how it had died. There is still a trace of the boys here. At least there is plenty of sign of Bob and me. □

Larry Winter, a computer scientist, has lived in Tucson all his life.

Editor's note: Pima Canyon faces a precarious future. More than 400 acres at its mouth, north of Ina Road and Skyline and south of Coronado National Forest, are owned by developers Don Diamond and Don Pitt. Under a Pima County area plan, development — including a light industrial park — is possible, although zoning for the land will be up to the Board of Supervisors. As we went to press, county officials were about to go public with a proposal to buy some of the property in order to preserve it for public use. One of many questions is this: will the public have access to Pima Canyon and its trails? Supervisor Greg Lunn, who represents the area, pledged that it will, "under any scenario." He is, however, just one of five votes.

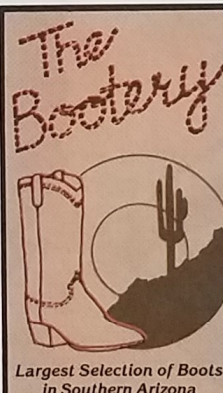


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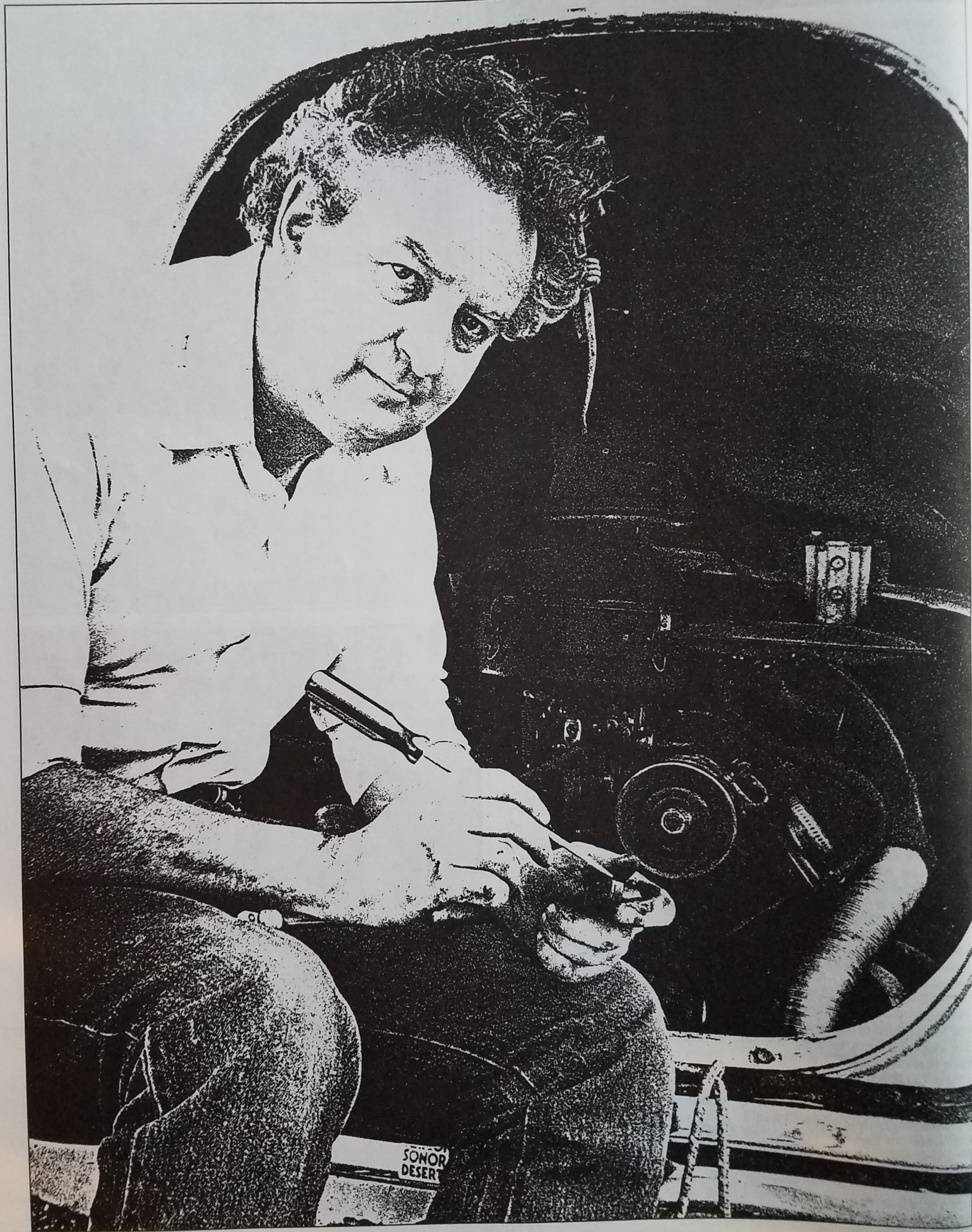


Photo by Geof Gribbin

By Norma Coile

KROMKO

*The legislature's
primo prankster wants to be
taken seriously.
Probably he should be.*

The parking lot in the shadow of the capitol's copper dome is reserved for Arizona's legislators. A 1970 Volkswagen slumps there, its front caved in from an ancient collision and its back bumper tied on with rope. Pockmarks crater its dull, powder-blue finish. Oblivious, or maybe proud, State Rep. John Kromko swings into the driver's seat and leans over to give the stuck passenger door a good shove. There's an innocent smile on his pouchy pink face, making him look like a forty-seven-year-old cherub gone slightly to seed, with a wild halo of fuzzy gray curls.

Underfoot on the floorboards are a hubcap, an empty yellow coolant container, a pair of high-top tennis shoes and a scuffed sheaf of legislative bills. Tossed on the heap of stuff in the back seat are a fresh pair of Levi 501s and a couple of clean shirts, slung on hangers but not hung — Rep. Kromko's clothes for the work week. (His toothbrush and stash of mega-vitamins, the other essentials, are in his office.) During the legislative session he whips this sorry Beetle up and down Interstate 10, sometimes several times a week — there's always a rezoning protest or some other new cause drawing him home to Tucson. But on those nights when he's stuck in Phoenix, he lives out of this car and a Motel 6.

Now he's tooling along in the bouncing bug, headed for a Wendy's salad bar, his passenger fighting motion sickness even though the place is only a few blocks away. This is Kromko's idea of a night out on the

town, even when someone else is offering to buy. Other legislators are hanging out with lobbyists in the dark red booths of Durant's on Central Avenue, drinking Scotch, eating beef and sporting cigars. But trying to imagine Kromko in that scene is like picturing Mother Teresa at a discotheque: It can't be done.

Hunched over the wheel, he's suddenly giggling like a kid caught with a *Penthouse*. A couple of months ago, he reveals, he was pulled over by a cop for some little reason and discovered that the vehicle he used to drive, a neon green Renault Le Car in considerably better condition than this thing is, was uninsured. Kromko, who long ago "realized how unfair and wrong capitalism was," and who cheerfully admits to his "pretty strong socialistic feelings," has a real loose mind-set when it comes to possessions. They bore him. The green car belonged to some friends; he'd been giving them money for insurance but it turns out they forgot to pay the premiums.

This is the character who could "end the auto insurance industry as we know it," by organizing an initiative drive this summer to erase "the profit motive" from basic insurance coverage in Arizona? The Big Threat who has

insurance lobbyists quaking in their \$100 wingtips?

Yep, the very one. But Kromko, the legislature's biggest joker, stops giggling when the incongruity is pointed out to him. Turning earnest, he launches into an explanation of his "real straightforward" plan: To have drivers buy their minimum insurance from the state, at lower, nonprofit rates. He doesn't seem to see any particular humor in the crack about the left-wing wacko in the junker car who's taking on the whole damn insurance industry.

Because when John Kromko sets out to woo the voters on an issue, he knows he's no joke.

This is the occasional teacher, printer, mechanic, gas pumper and convenience store clerk who:

- Organized Arizonans to repeal the regressive sales tax on food in 1979, spending \$8,000 of his \$15,000 legislative salary on the cause.
- Edged the state closer to a crack-down on water polluters by collecting tens of thousands of signatures three years ago.
- Forced public votes on all freeway projects by successfully urging Tucsonans to pass the "Neighborhood

Protection Amendment" in 1985.

- Played like a Steinway the community's resentment of the University of Arizona over its recent \$30,000 "A" logo.

- Seized control of the Pima County Democratic Party in 1987-'88, scandalizing its moderates.

- Helped two right-wingers, Evan Mecham and Ed Moore, get elected.

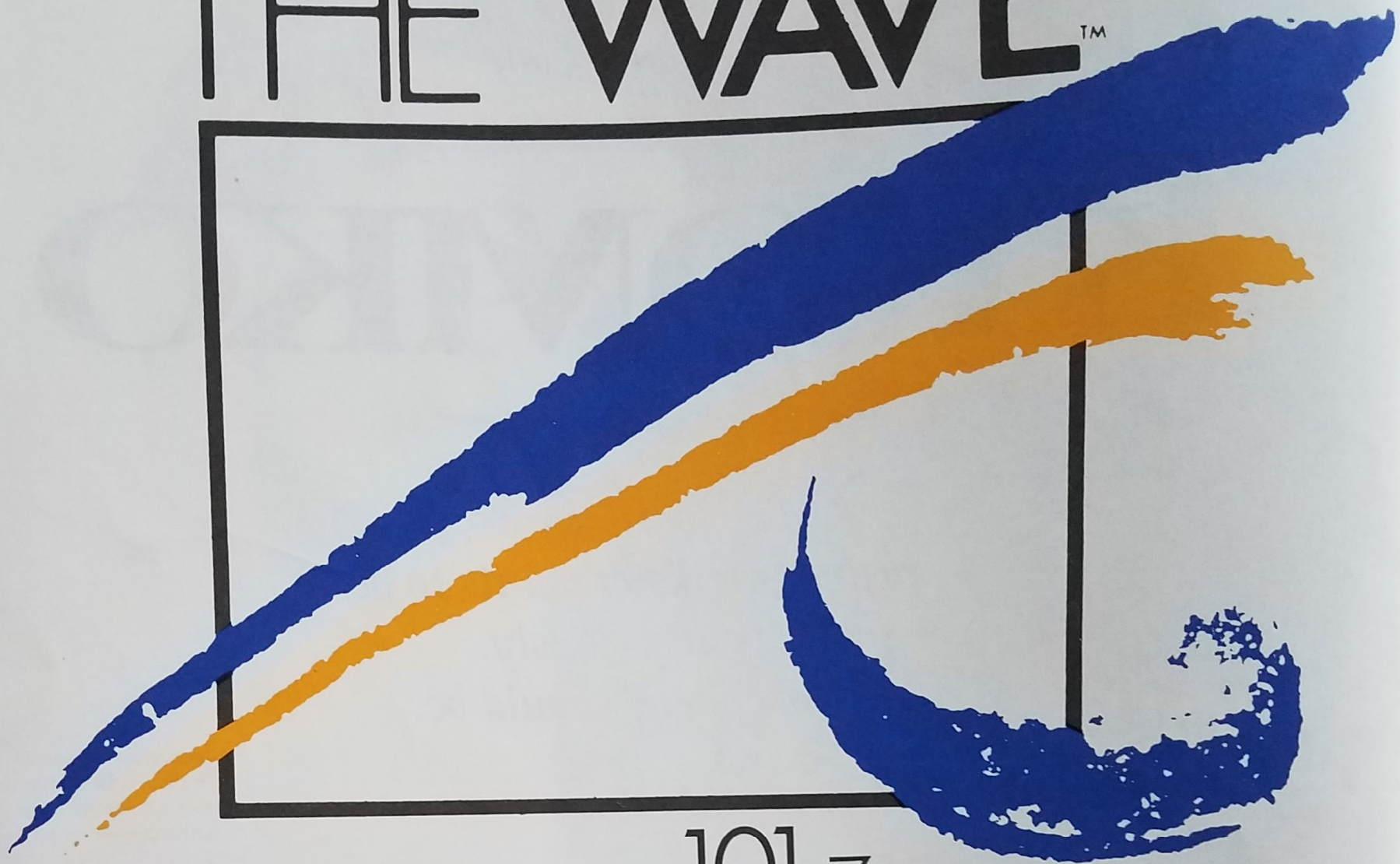
- Has so much voter information plugged into his computer that he boasts he could probably win any elective office he wanted in Tucson.

There was no warning he'd turn out this way.

In 1962 he was a senior in electrical engineering at Penn State, "pretty conservative" in his personal style and blissfully ignorant in his insular scientific world. A geek in training, in other words. He worked summer jobs building missiles. "It's so stunning," he says now, "but it never occurred to us to ask, 'Hey, what's this missile going to do when it gets there?' It was just a project that seemed worth doing because we were learning a lot."

He'd scored a bunch of high-paying job offers and things were looking good as he neared graduation. And then, out of the blue, he did this amazing thing he still can't explain: passing one of those political tables set up on campus, he signed up for a Freedom Ride to the simmering South. "I came from a small town in Pennsylvania where there weren't any black people," he says, still trying to puzzle it out. "I didn't know anything about politics,

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and I can't say that I was feeling any dissatisfaction. But somehow, it just seemed like the right thing to do."

Perhaps, he speculates, it's as simple as this: college freshmen are too green to pick their future careers. A poor student in his early years, Kromko had discovered in junior high that he was very good at math and science, and from that point on, he was a brain who always assumed he'd be an engineer. "I had an uncle who was an engineer or something," he shrugs. "But I didn't know what an engineer did." His blue-collar parents, who'd worked in coal mines and factories, had been apolitical — union people, as every eastern millworker was at the time, but not actively so. They didn't even take the newspaper while he was growing up, and there were no memorable conversations about politics around the supper table.

The summer he spent in the civil rights movement made a startling impression, but it did not transform him overnight — he came back north to work on an M.B.A. at Temple University. "Can you imagine? Business administration! We had to wear suits to class every day." To save money he lived in North Philadelphia. About the time of the Watts riots, he came home one day to find that his whole block was on fire. "It was a stunning revelation for me. I remember standing there, and the whole place was burning, and not only was I not upset, I understood it. I thought to myself, 'If I had to stay here all my life, I'd burn it down too.' It was an awful place; you could go for seven or eight miles and you'd still be in a slum. The only thing that was keeping me from helping with the burning was that I knew I was leaving the next year. And that shook me, because the idea of private property had been so important to me."

Kromko likes to joke that his career was "all downhill from there," catapulting him into a life in which, to quote Lyndon Johnson, he rarely thinks about politics more than eighteen hours a day. Arriving at the University of Arizona in 1965 to teach, to "see more of the country" and attempt a Ph.D. in statistics, he was shocked to find that Tucson hadn't noticed there was a war on. He fell in with the local peace movement, such as it was — the same thirty people at every march, including some Quakers. Noticing that student government was being run by fraternity presidents, he also got himself elected to the Student Senate. "I just realized right away: 'You need to take this over.' And boy, things really happened fast. In two or three years, by 1968, all the fraternity presidents had beards and were smoking dope. The struggle in student government was between the radicals and the extreme radicals."

Kromko had a printing press by then, and he remembers printing the newsletter for the UA Marxist Leninist collective. His independence and prag-

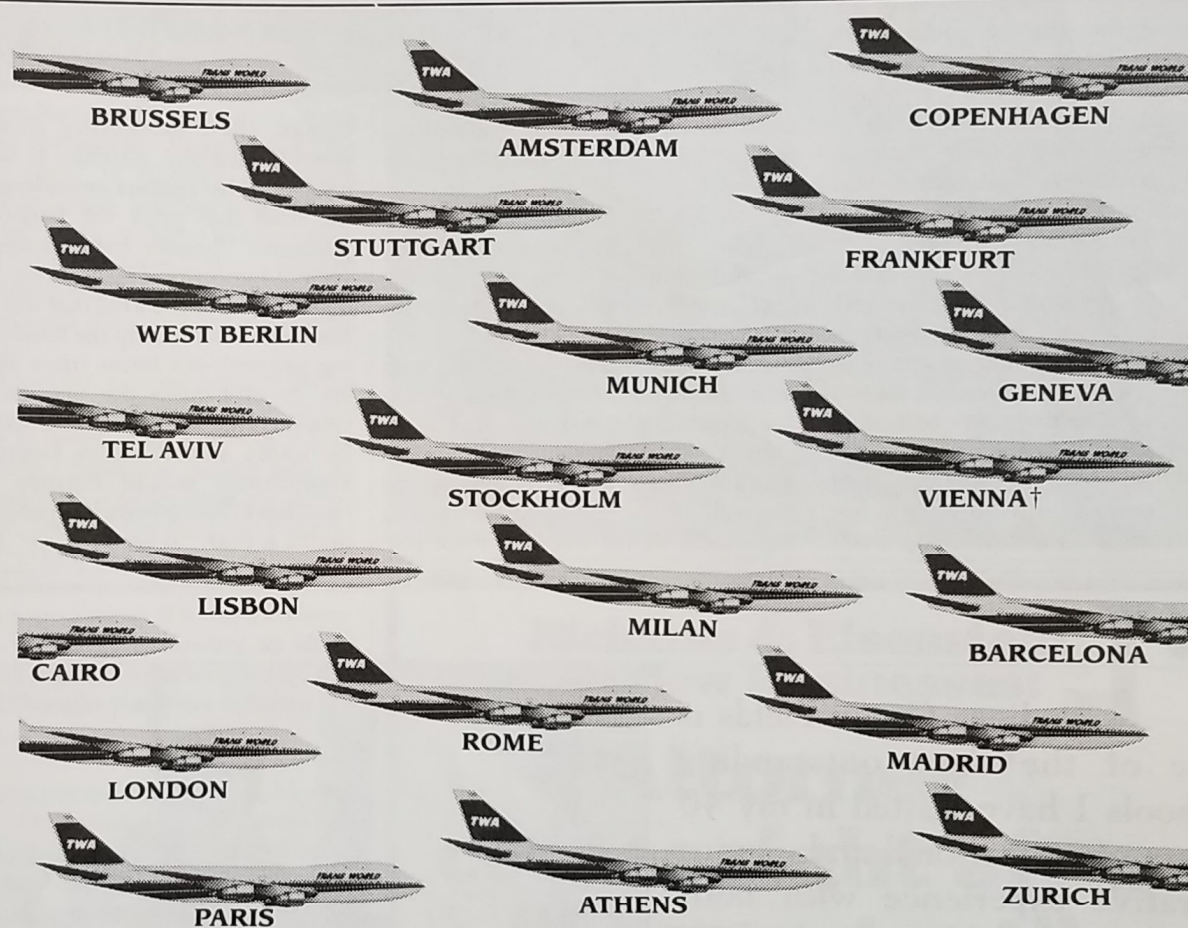
matism already were evident: "I made it a point never to learn the difference between a Marxist and a Leninist and a Maoist, because these guys could never get together on anything. One day the campus had a guy from Cuba come and speak, who had been with Castro right from the beginning. When he had finished speaking, one of these guys stood up and asked, 'Were you following the teachings of...?' I forget, some obscure writer. The Cuban said, 'What! The people were starving; we just got some guns, man.' I thought that was great."

He learned something from that line, just as he did from the sixties' front lines. "When I got down to the south, a

lot of black people didn't want us there. 'Why don't you go back north?' they said. I realized an important thing that's made me a little harder than I should've been, perhaps: You can show people a way, but you can't do it for them. I felt the same way about the women's movement when I worked for the ERA. The fact was, the people who were running that movement were not in touch with women. And during the anti-war stuff, we made a major tactical mistake. There was some flag-burning and some flags upside down. We should have wrapped that flag around us, portrayed ourselves as very patriotic, that we wanted to stop the war for the good of our country. And we could

have sold that.... The American people are very shallow when it comes to politics; we can barely understand the difference between two parties. So the symbolism is very important. [George] Bush saluting the flag — what does that mean? It shouldn't be allowed to work, but it does."

Along with all the big social movements, there were localized fights drawing Kromko's attention in the Student Senate, preparing him for the thirteen years he would spend (to date) in the state legislature. Kromko, who sued the university several times, takes some of the credit for winning freedom of speech and civil liberties for students — like getting rid of the rule that said



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female students couldn't get married without the permission of the dean of women. "What we did was, we demanded that all university committees have one-third students on them. And the faculty, a bunch of nerds, they got a free ride: they got one-third too." He is particularly proud of leading the hands-on building of a day care center out of an old apartment. The university administration, apparently already irritated by Kromko, eventually bulldozed the thing for a parking lot, he laments.

After Kromko got arrested during one anti-war protest at Old Main — "I remember, we smashed down the door" — a UA dean called him in. "I thought this was the end of me. But he said, 'John, a lot of my friends in my generation thought we could work within the system and change it. Well, that doesn't work. Once you're within the system, it's too late. Keep it up.' It was really inspirational." Kromko declines to name the dean because "the guy's still at the university."

And yet, by the early seventies, Kromko had infiltrated the system as a Democrat representing west and central Tucson in the state legislature — although he was living in a former chicken coop with a makeshift shower and a stove. The place was owned by Renz Jennings, now an influential consumer advocate on the Arizona Corporation Commission, who offered free rent in return for a little co-op work.

"Every freak in the universe was there. We were doing all this solar energy stuff, digging a pit for digesting manure to make methane, doing silk-screening...." In retrospect, Kromko admits with a laugh, it was pretty uncomfortable. He woke up one night thinking there'd been an earthquake. It was a horse, leaning on the chicken wire.

Suddenly, Kromko turns serious. "The people from the sixties are all still

nings. Legislative calendars are tacked across a bulletin board, and the thick blue books of Arizona's laws fill a bookcase. The only signs of his spark are a close-up photo of him kissing his pet bird; and a newspaper clipping that will help him make fun of a bill to outlaw obscene bumper stickers, such as "Shit Happens." The clipping announces the new town motto in Silt, Colorado: "Silt Happens."

Alternately staring into space as he

knowledges, giggling. "But if more than four churches object to it, we'll publish their names."

This is the way Kromko operates. He employs barbed humor to modify bills that bestow unearned privileges or haven't been thought out very well, or to kill the really bad ones. At the very least, he will manage to embarrass their sponsors. As a member of the minority party, and a representative of the minority city in the legislature, this is his role — not power-brokering or setting the legislative agenda, but nipping at the heels of those who do.

"Kromko-isms" are legendary at the capitol. There was the time some legislators were in an "isolationist hysteria" to take down the experimental metric highway signs on I-19 between Tucson and Nogales. Kromko amended their bill so the "dangerous" signs not only would be removed, but burned. (The bill died.) Another time, while the House was embracing some bill to "screw over the Indians," Kromko walked up to the sponsor and quietly put a string of beads in her hand to remind her of the purchase of Manhattan. He once offered an amendment that would have required legislators to carry a cigarette-style warning label if they voted for any bills they had previously spoken against.

Three years ago, he demystified a GOP anti-porn bill that decried "shameful... interest in sex and nudity." "I've been out with Republican

"I've been out with Republican women," he deadpanned. "I can see the problem: you're not having any fun, so you don't want anyone else to."

around," he says, "and people don't realize the extent to which we're in control."

Fast-forward to 1989: It's a March day at the capitol, in the height of the legislature's annual rush to pass hundreds of new laws.

Kromko starts early, working in an office that shows nothing of his colorful personality except his workaholic side. A pile of newspapers dominates a cheap plaid couch crammed against the wall; on the front page of one is a big profile of his old bud Renz Jen-

thinks, then hunkering down to scribble gleefully, Kromko is writing another of his famous amendments — the ones that prick the balloons of pompous Phoenix Republicans and various hypocritical institutions. Someone has introduced a bill that will allow small churches to skip the hassle of filing property-tax forms (they already are exempt from the tax itself, of course). That's fine with Kromko, but he wants something in return: his amendment would require these churches to house homeless people two nights a year. "It won't pass," he ac-

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women," he deadpanned. "I can see the problem: you're not having any fun, so you don't want anyone else to." Indignant women in the Pima County Republican Club got him back, by God: They picketed.

Among this year's contributions to the lore was his hilarious skewering of the UA, whose campus is in his legislative district. When the university went out of state for a new "A" logo, the \$30,000 tab included \$8,000 in travel expenses for the designer. Kromko explained in a house speech that the artist needed all that cavorting across the country to "sort of get in the mood." This guy was from Baltimore, and he mostly specialized in Bs. Voters busted a gut, while UA spokesperson Sharon Kha fought back with UA's own famous sense of humor: She retorted that Kromko "lied" when he said UA didn't seek any Tucson artists to do the logo. The *Tucson Citizen* editorial page, meanwhile, groused about "state wiseguy" you-know-who and his sarcastic speeches.

Kromko, however, had recognized the logo as the perfect symbol of the bigger problem, in his mind: UA's arrogance and lack of accountability to taxpayers. "I've gotten a long way in politics by perceiving things the way Joe Average perceives them. These people from the UA were trying to explain what they did, and they were talking in terms nobody could understand or relate to — 'well, we took the low bid.' The UA doesn't realize how people really perceive them. That was a key in the Speedway Tunnel defeat, for example, the hatred for the university. It's just they have this elitist attitude that people dislike. I had a bill last year that they'd have to advertise jobs when they became available, because there have been stories over there that they give jobs to their friends. Man, they were up here, they spent more time fighting that bill.

"Same way with the regents disclosing their financial holdings. I put that bill in and a couple of them announced they'd quit rather than disclose. These people — they're so detached from the real world. In their recent memory, they've not been in a position where they've had to pay attention to anybody."

Kromko draws inspiration for his off-the-cuff wit from cartoonist Gary Larson of "The Far Side," who "is right on the money" at showing the absurdities of human behavior. Larson sometimes works in a zoo for his ideas, but Kromko won't say there's a parallel in the conservative Arizona legislature. "I don't want to knock these people. When I first came here, I read these stories, and I thought these people were lunatics. Like Jim Skelly [a right-winger from Scottsdale], who's against day care. I thought, 'this stingy guy.' But then I realized: he honestly and truthfully feels day care is a sin, that this is eroding our society to have women not stay home and take care of their kids. I

can shoot this down with economic reality, of course. But there are very few people in the legislature who are this strong in their beliefs. The squishy moderates who do whatever is politically expedient, who just waffle back and forth and have no moral positions at all — *they're* the ones I have no respect for."

On a few issues involving less government and more civil liberties, the far right actually meets the far left, and Skelly and Kromko vote together. But more productive, by far, has been Kromko's unlikely alliance back in Tucson with another Republican, Wanda Shattuck, the progressive neighborhood activist from the Foothills. Kromko and Shattuck teamed up to pass the controversial Neighborhood Protection Amendment and to gather tens of thousands of signatures in favor of a low-density buffer zone around Saguaro National Monument. Shattuck rustled the money; Kromko did "the grunt work" of figuring out which voters to target, printing fliers on his printing press, making signs — "my usual stuff." He jokes that he's learned from these Foothills women why "the Republicans are going to be powerful forever."

"One time we were going to put up signs, and we agreed to meet at my house at seven in the morning. About six-thirty I hear cars pulling into the driveway; I don't even have any clothes on yet. They've got the pickup trucks to carry the signs, and each person has a typed list of the locations the signs are going to go. I mean, if it was the Democrats, they'd start showing up about eight-thirty, and somebody would say, 'Oh, I thought you were bringing the truck...'"

An hour into the morning, he's got the churches-and-the-homeless amendment ready and shipped off to be printed, so Kromko decides it's time for a coffee break. Roaming down the hall, he passes Casa Grande Republican Jim Hartdegen, a kind of hip cowboy. Seeing each other, both men cluck like chickens.

As usual, there's a method to Kromko's madness. He's pushing a bill to make cockfighting a felony in Arizona, and this year, finally, he truly believes the votes are there. Hartdegen, who has a lot of cockfighters in his rural district, has killed the measure by refusing to hear it in his agriculture committee. But Kromko's just waiting for the right moment to slip a cockfighting amendment onto another bill. "I know it's coming, I just don't know when," laughs Hartdegen.

In the coffee room, Kromko checks out the blonde ASU student who's manning it, then bites his hand. A couple of weeks ago, he asked Rep. Leslie Johnson to introduce a bill outlawing a certain nubile college intern who is assigned to one of Kromko's committees. Johnson, a Mormon Republican known for clipping grocery

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coupons during house debate, for arousing the fantasies of liberal male legislators by parading in fuchsia hats with feathers, and for launching annual crusades to outlaw pornography and dildos, said no. "C'mon," Kromko pleaded, "you make everything else illegal."

Completing his rounds, Kromko goes from secretary to secretary searching for chocolate or peanut candy; not exactly overweight, but somewhat reminiscent of a human koala bear, he'll pay the miserable penance of raw broccoli and cauliflower for dinner.

Suddenly, the building is jarred by the bell summoning representatives to their wood-paneled chamber for floor debate, and it's show time.

From his desk in the back of the cavernous room, Kromko rises to support Mrs. Johnson's latest anti-porn number. "In the past, I would have been standing up here saying the state should not get involved in activities between consenting adults," he notes. "But today, after reading this bill carefully, I realize that it is a consumer-protection bill — that every peep-show booth has to be equipped with a little meter to keep track of how much money you've spent so far. I understand that a lot of people have been asking for this." His colleagues are cracking up. "And I see that the Department of Weights and Measures is required to go in every year and check the little meters, and I understand that this won't cost the state anything, because they've volunteered to do it for free. So I really feel, still, that the state should stay out of the people's business, but this bill goes so far in giving the consumers a protection they've never had before that I'm gonna vote for it proudly, and I want to thank Mrs. Johnson for all the consumer-protection measures she's going to introduce in the future."

The sponsor is blushing, but even she has learned to lighten up and laugh with this relentless radical. In fact, most Republicans in the house can afford to be amused by him; there are more than enough earnest Dudley Do-Rights to counteract him and protect the status quo. There's another, subtler reason: Kromko manages to make his points good-naturedly, without the smug condescension that traps some other brainy Democrats marooned in the Republican-controlled legislature. "Yeah, [former Tucson Rep.] Reid Ewing came to me one day and said 'John, you do the same things I do up here, but they all hate me. How do you do it?'"

The key, Kromko says, is "not to get married to anything. We're here every day, and we win some and we lose some. It's serious, but you can't take it on a personal level. That makes you more vulnerable, and more unreasonable, too."

Just the same, beneath the kidding, Kromko's got a serious agenda that never quits, on everything from environmental protection to a guarantee of

health care for every citizen. "We would do so much for our people in regard to mental health, if we just came up to everybody and said 'look, no matter what happens, you and your kid will always have enough to eat and a place to live and health care.' My poor Dad, I went home years ago and the guy's worried that when he dies, he hopes it comes fast, so they don't take the house away from my mother. Here's a guy who's worked all his life; he shouldn't have to think about that."

But most capitol insiders dismiss him as basically irrelevant as an actual maker of laws. "He's not a bit effective," asserts Sierra Vista Republican Bill English. "He makes a lot of noise, that's all. He had some good ideas for a couple of years; he served as kind of a conscience for us, on technical things, where a bill had gone wrong and we were maybe too close to see the forest for the trees. But he's definitely gotten away from that, and he's now just another gadfly out there — buzzing around and causing problems, instead of working on solutions. [Republican]

"...call it socialized medicine and everybody freaks. Call it a 'universal comprehensive health plan,' and everybody likes it."

leadership gets frustrated by him, because he impedes the flow of the system, and the system must move."

Not all of the criticism is partisan. "He's so often up in the ionosphere," complains Kromko's fellow Democrat from central Tucson, Rep. Peter Goudinoff. "But because he's bright, he often has good ideas, even if they're not normal."

And everyone has immense respect, or fear, for his expert skills as a community activist and petition-passer. He's had tremendous success with the voters, issue after issue. That's why the laughing stops, and the serious rebuttals begin, every time Kromko mentions his plan to have the state provide basic auto insurance coverage to drivers. He presented this to the insurance industry's lobbyists earlier this year, and says they went berserk. Meanwhile, there were testy negotiations to roll back insurance rates as a compromise. But if Republicans sympathetic to the insurance industry insist on allowing "no fault" insurance, under which drivers would sign away their future claims, the Democrats have a not-so-secret weapon:

"Our answer will be Kromko," warns Goudinoff.

Kromko, for his part, believes very much that he is a success in the legislature. Being a member of the minority forces you to do better work, he says. But mostly, his confidence stems from

the incredible, lasting shifts in American society he has observed since the sixties. The system can change; with perseverance, he can prod it. "Almost everything I've wanted as a legislator has eventually happened," he insists. "When I first got here I was talking about closing tax loopholes; years later, the Republicans finally realized how great that idea was politically."

"I wanted to stop nuclear reactors, and now even the president of APS [Arizona Public Service in Phoenix] wishes they hadn't built them. Because it's happened just the way I thought it would. I told them way back when: 'You won't be able to afford these some day; you won't be able to make your money back.' And nuclear reactors have come to a halt in the country."

"We haven't made as much progress on economic reform. We've gotten all out of kilter with regards to the compensation for things. People are doing relatively easy jobs that make \$200,000 a year, while somebody who kills himself working will make \$7,000. Some countries have gone to a very flat

wage structure, and it doesn't hurt their productivity at all. You go to Sweden, for example, and they have a higher standard of living than ours. It's a myth that people wouldn't work just as hard if we made a more egalitarian society. I have pretty strong socialistic feelings."

"I thought we'd have socialized medicine by now," he continues. "But we're gonna have it someday. It just has to be billed right — call it socialized medicine and everybody freaks. Call it a 'universal comprehensive health plan,' and everybody likes it. But before people go berserk reading that, be sure to point out that nobody wants to end the social security system, pensions, unemployment compensations. We're not allowed to say it, it's against the rules, but we've come a long way toward socialism, and we could go a lot further, painlessly."

Not your typical Democratic Party-chairman talk, for sure. So how did a guy like this get elected to head the Pima County party in 1987? Pretty easily, actually; he recruited hundreds of new precinct committee people to elect him, including "leftists, militants, communists, Sierra Clubbers and Earth Firsters," he giggles, and he's not exaggerating much. Even some moderates went along, because Kromko offered energy and grassroots organizing. "He was someone who could teach us how to do computer targeting," explains

one party leader. "We just didn't realize that he wouldn't be able to get us the money to do it."

Indeed, Kromko knows more about the amazing political feats computers can perform than anyone else around. He once showed a Libertarian friend how he could call her name up in an instant and learn "almost everything there is to know about her" — her place of employment, the estimated income levels of people on her street, the last election she voted in. She was appalled.

These Kromko talents notwithstanding, Democratic money people, including the predictable fat-cat developers and their lawyers — but also some more objective economic-growth advocates of, say, the Kennedy school — reportedly refused to contribute money for elections unless guaranteed that Chairman Kromko couldn't get his hands on it. Meanwhile, he was pulling the party into local development controversies many mainstream Democrats felt it had no business in, like the drive for a low-density buffer around the monument, and a neighborhood battle over a high-rise UA dorm. To this day, he passionately defends his plan for the party to capitalize on the environmental movement in Tucson: "We did a poll and more than 93 percent of the people supported the idea of a buffer zone. The party should go to what the people are feeling."

But there were other problems, too. Kromko, who had never been shy about criticizing "waffly" Democratic leaders like Bruce Babbitt and Tom Volgy, found himself defending Republican Gov. Evan Mecham last year — not for his politics or competence, which were "awful," but because "I have a strong sense of justice and fairness, and I didn't believe he committed any impeachable offenses," he explains. (That didn't stop Kromko the political animal from voting for impeachment on one count, however. Since Republicans were voting to remove their own governor, Democrats could hardly do otherwise, he explains.) Not only that, Kromko had helped Mecham win his GOP primary over Burton Barr in 1986 by showing his campaign how to target voters. Kromko believed it would be easier for the Democrats' candidate to beat Mecham than Barr, but his strategy backfired.

His anti-materialistic instincts led, indirectly, to an embarrassment in the 1988 election, as well, party insiders claim. At Kromko's behest, the party took over an abandoned gas station that didn't cost anything and fixed it up just enough — barely — to serve as a headquarters. But the ceiling didn't meet city code, and the party found itself out of an office just a couple of weeks before the local presidential primary. Calls to the party had to be forwarded to the kitchen of one Democrat's house.

On the "plus" side of Kromko's

never-dull chairmanship, more Democrats than Republicans registered to vote in Pima County, reversing a recent trend. And the party had a record number of precinct workers during his term, indicating action and involvement — rather than the normal snoozing — on the grassroots level. But it was inevitable he'd step down, and he did, about the middle of last year. He can accomplish more for Democrats outside of the party's inner clique, which is too scared of controversy to achieve anything, he maintains.

Last summer, Kromko wouldn't make up his mind whether to run for re-election or for a seat on the board of supervisors against fellow Democrat Raul Grijalva. He didn't announce that he'd stay in the house until a few days before the filing deadline. Some Democrats contend his indecision had the effect of paralyzing other potential candidates who would have given voters strong choices in the party primary. Others complain that Kromko was arrogant about the supervisorial race, as if he was the only one who would be able to save Pima County, despite the liberal credentials and Hispanic constituency of Grijalva. Environmentalists take a third view: they're disappointed that Kromko backed out of the county race, especially since other neighborhood activists failed to get on the board last year. "Grijalva is one of my favorite people," Kromko insists. "But he has never done anything on environmental issues, which scares me a little a bit. I'm not sure, now, if I did the right thing. It depends on how Grijalva turns out."

At the time, Grijalva, who went on to win the supervisorial seat, made it clear that he would have played hardball by citing Kromko's political association with Supervisor Ed Moore. Moore is the region's most controversial politician and a conservative Democrat on the outs with party regulars for supporting Mecham. Kromko made campaign signs for him in 1984, buying into the naive assumption that Moore, a millionaire real estate speculator who was then a political unknown, would provide pro-neighborhood, pro-environment leadership. Instead, Moore has lately voted so staunchly pro-development that Kromko admits: "Now, after everything's come out, I wouldn't go near the guy."

It's hard to predict Kromko's ultimate political goals, beyond the social changes he dreams of. After one loss a number of years ago that interrupted his legislative tenure, he's been content to return to Phoenix year after year, courtesy of the voters in his heavily Democratic, lower-to-upper middle-class district. Still, his passions against freeways and rampant development are so local in nature, the county board election in 1992 tugs at him. "I may have to run against Ed Moore," he claims.

For a self-proclaimed watchdog so quick to bark at other politicians' hypocrisies and potential conflicts, Kromko is too proud to see clearly his own critical inconsistency. In 1986 he briefly borrowed \$68,035 from Moore so he could bid on some apartments. A socialistic radical who disdains possessions wanted to be a landlord, or a speculator, with the help of a land mogul like Moore? Still defensive about the outcry the loan caused, Kromko seems not to comprehend the inadequacy of his explanation — that he "hardly knew Moore at the time." Kromko was visiting Moore's office one day and it came out in casual conversation that a friend of Kromko's was losing six run-down apartments on the auction block. Moore instantly whipped out his checkbook, suggesting that Kromko bid on them. Kromko still professes to see no problem. "If I'd gotten the bid, I would have gone straight to a bank for financing and paid him back in a couple of weeks. But I didn't get the bid, and they sent his check back to him. So it's not like I ever

Kromko continued on page 48

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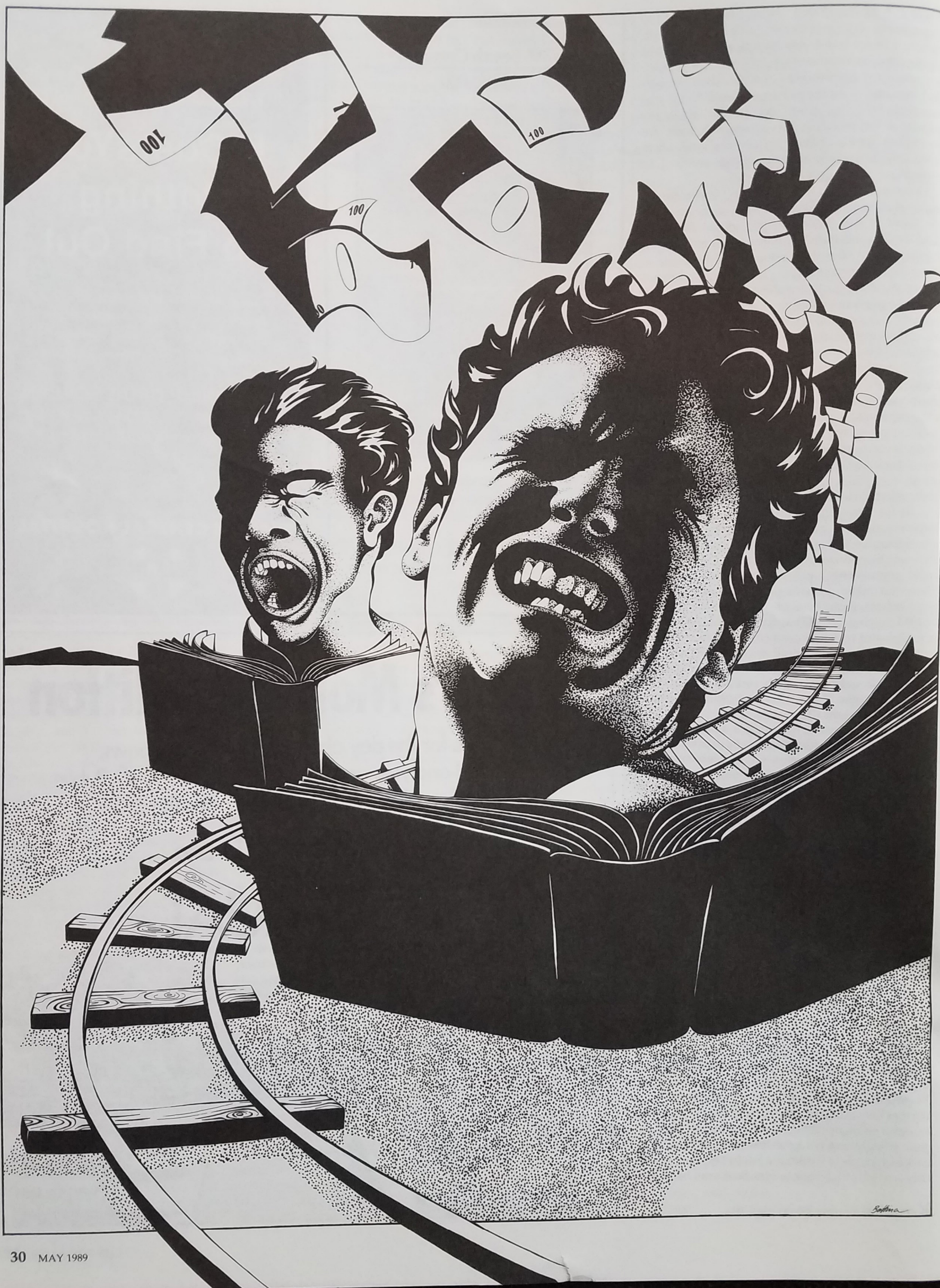
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Killing Them Softly

Inside Southern Pacific's Rubber Room

By Alan Harrington
Illustrations by Bettina

Without work all life goes rotten. But when the work is soulless life stifles and dies.

— Albert Camus

Computers ride the rails and dominate the offices where armies of clerks once worked. All facets of moving the freight are experiencing the awesome power of the information revolution... It's the sad but irreversible movement of progress, like the demise of stagecoach drivers when the train appeared.

— Richard Barchfield, locomotive engineer and fireman from Tucson

Like all major rail centers, the Southern Pacific yard in Tucson never sleeps or takes a holiday. Trains rumble all night. Across the tracks, hammers bang and lathes whine in the repair shops. Outside, this shift moves toward a warm October midnight. Shrouded yardmen, their lanterns swinging, work mostly in solitude. A full moon shines down on the Arizona desert; the switch engine rolls by pushing a cut of cars onto a sidetrack. Now a second locomotive starts vibrating. The commands to its engineer, though now sent by radio, haven't changed since 1888.

"Set your brakes!

"Release your brakes!"

Then the long hiss....

"Highball!"

"Goin' for beans!" the carman lets his yard boss know.

His own grandfather might have shouted that as he trudged toward the diner shanty to chow down and swap jokes with the beanery queen, or her mother. Bells still jangle at these switches and crossings. A beam falls along the track, and that priority train at the yard's edge sounds its horn, which is still called a whistle.

Stubborn nostalgia, of course. Shortly after the first diesels were displayed at Chicago's Century of Progress fair in 1934, steam locomotives and their whistles vanished from our main lines. Sickly-sweet diesel fumes ("a fragrance, not an odor," Calvin the fireman jokes) have drifted across Southern Pacific yards for fifty years. Duty here remains "exhausting, dirty and unreal," in his opinion — yet including a grimy glory too, and a romance told in so many songs and legends. Signing on, all SP employees learn of the railroad's fabulous past, how it opened up the Southwest.

Once this Tucson yard was a

workplace of pride, the fireman remembers. "All that history, you felt it. And 'being part of a family' — that was SP's line. No wonder those clerks down here in the Rubber Room feel so bad, now that the company's turned against them."

For the past two weeks, there have been about 100 clerical workers at the Southern Pacific who would give anything to be working on the railroad.

The clerks, in California, Oregon and Arizona, have been paid more than \$100 a day to do nothing. And it's driving them nuts....

Without explanation, the railroad late last month stripped the clerks of all duties, reassigned them to overnight shifts and ordered them to sit for eight hours a night — sometimes in offices lacking phone, paper and pencils — with permission to do nothing but read the company rule book.

— The Los Angeles Times, May 15, 1988

... their activities are limited to talking or reading company timetables and work rules, [and] just as before, they will continue to be paid about \$110 a day....

(Southern Pacific Transportation Company)... in a letter to workers, said it needs to cut its workforce of 24,500 by 5,000 employees in the next three to five years "just to survive...."

"The so-called rubber rooms were mandated by the need to identify and separate the needed jobs from the unneeded jobs," SP said in the four-page letter.

But the Transportation Communication Union contends that the SP is using psychological warfare to persuade workers to quit...

— San Francisco Chronicle, May 17, 1988

In October 1988 the Rubber Room for outcast Southern Pacific clerks is easy to find; they're assembled in Tucson's downtown depot. A church clock across town has just chimed midnight. Some of the obsolete ones simply idle by the tracks; they smoke and gaze up at the night clouds. When speaking to an unauthorized person, their voices turn shadowy. Who among them doesn't know by heart SP's Umbrella Rule?

"Employees will not be retained in the service who are careless of the safety of themselves or others, insubordinate, dishonest, immoral, quarrelsome [italics added] or otherwise vicious, or who do not conduct themselves in such a manner that the railroad will not be subjected to criticism and loss of good will...."

"Sorry...."

Blazing fluorescent rods light the Rubber Room. There's a stale smell. You've intruded, and a half-dozen men and women, older, middle-aged, young, shy away from you. One covers

up his Smoking Gun paperback; another hides the sketch made with his illegal pencil; a third snatches off her headphones, but too late: tiny Fleetwood Mac sounds murmur in her handbag.

It's okay, okay....

Some uncertain smiles come back.

"Sorry...."

In the cubicle next door, being more careful, a shave-and-a-haircut knock gives Audrey time enough to spread an SP rules manual over the small black book and its red ribbon. She's been transcribing passages from her Holy Bible into the computer terminal.

What for?

"You'll laugh."

"No."

"Five months, since May! If I didn't know for sure that Jesus was with me, I don't think I could get through these nights."

Who are these men and women? Faded cowboy movies recall the traditional, rather comforting figure of the Southern Pacific clerk wearing a green-visored eyeshade, elastic bands on his or her shirt cuffs, perhaps bent over telegraph keys, tapping out messages to a station down the line.

They hardly belonged with the elite of railroading: lordly engineers, weathered firemen, brakemen, yardmasters, even the switchmen and on-board conductors. Railway clerks were back-up people offering their old-fashioned skills as telegraphers, call-in crew dispatchers, chroniclers of crew arrivals and departures, waybill calculators, monitors of per diem billing. Yet up until two or three years ago, SP couldn't run without them. A saying once had it: "The railroad doesn't run on rails; it runs on paper."

But today, suddenly, it runs on computer printouts. Which means, if you're one of those clerks, computers perform your century-old assignments with ridiculous ease, and at a speed beyond hope of ever being equalled by a person.

Railway employment has long been compared to military service. Over the past hundred years, if he behaved himself, a good employee could more or less count on a lifetime career with the line of his choice. Still this service might be interrupted for any number of reasons, like *Hard Times*. In *Men of the Steel Rails*, James H. Ducker notes: "When the 1874 grasshopper plague dealt a blow to Santa Fe earnings, the company slashed payroll expenses twenty percent by dismissing employees or shortening hours."

More likely you could be laid off for improper performance. On and off shift, the railroad worker remains hedged in by a thicket of rules. "Like barbed wire," one has said. Originally these regulations were drawn up in part to protect workers. But violating one of them can lead to being cited, tried and fired.

Dismissal can be a shock, "like

being fired from your family," a clerk observed. SP, for one, has never stopped projecting the family image of its employees — like members of a clan separate from the rest of society — following the railroad's own disciplines and internal rhythms. Fortunately, getting fired doesn't necessarily last. If you're contrite, the clan may shortly take you back. The rules involve your:

- ✓ **Obedience to the Clock.** Scheduling demands may summon the railroad worker at any hour. You must be within reach of the dispatcher's phone call. This is especially true for workers with lower seniority, and those who are...

with junior Girl Scouts. It entered the language because of a system designed in 1888 by George R. Brown, general superintendent of New York's Fall Brook Railway, awarding merits and demerits. Brown's system based discipline on reform instead of retribution and was approved by both management and the unions. According to industrial ethnologist Frederick Gamst, it "abolished fines, threats of imprisonment, and summary suspensions...."

Yet, speaking in 1985, Gamst reported, "Railroads have not yet entirely left the early Victorian era of industrial personnel relations, which are quite militaristic and authoritarian...."



*"Night after night you lose ambition.
Get catatonic. Your confidence goes down.
I'm afraid to go out and compete again.
I know I shouldn't keep taking that
hundred dollars...."*

- ✓ **Working on the "Extra Board" List.** on call three times a day, seven days a week. You're going to be called away from your living room, supper table, neighborhood block party or Little League ball game to report on shift because someone higher on the seniority ladder has, say, phoned in sick.

- ✓ **Acceptance of "Bumping."** If your own clerical position has been blanked out by management, or taken over by a person with greater seniority, you in turn can "bump" somebody lower. This process can continue down the line, until the most recently hired person is bumped back onto the Extra Board.

- ✓ **Living Every Hour by Company Discipline.** For a hundred years railroad employees have been constantly monitored and rated. The expression "Brownie Points" has nothing to do

And they are seldom resisted. Railroad workers have generally given back a sometimes cranky but consistent loyalty to the harsh system they've worked under.

Calvin the fireman limps in the moonlight. "Those people in the Rubber Room, every damned weeknight!" He shakes his head. "Why don't they give up?"

The rails gleam behind him. Not yet forty, he's still young enough to change the direction of his life, transfer or go along with the buyout terms SP is offering to cut its workforce. Except that he can't bring himself to; after nearly twenty years with Southern Pacific, railroading is all he knows. Flecks of black rail dust have left scars pitting his cheeks like red pebbles. His wife Carrie won't move out of town. Forget it, she's told him.

"All changed now... Look..." He points to the shacks around SP's Tucson yard. In each shanty and roundhouse lone men sit peering at lighted screens. Trackside telemetry dances; the latest stats from Los Angeles flicker in front of them. These watchers study their instructions from IBM's Total Operating System.

U.S. rail freight carriers are sometimes mistaken for clumsy low-tech survivors of a bygone era. Not true: in 1988 Southern Pacific carried more tonnage than ever before in spite of its air freight and trucking competition. Without rail freight most of North America's heavy industry would slow nearly to a halt in two or three weeks.

Still, SP insists that it's in trouble. Overhead has to be cut — for instance, the unnecessary labor being carried out by those clerks hanging onto their seniority in the Rubber Rooms.

Calvin gazes at the vacant tracks before him. "Just like the cabooses; the company's phasing them out too." It's true, these will shortly survive only in children's bedtime books. They will be replaced by black boxes with red warning lights that blink in code. Most of Southern Pacific's brakemen and firemen are no longer needed either. Today trains nearly two miles long rumble across the Arizona desert with two-man crews — the locomotive engineer and conductor by themselves, on-board microprocessors guiding them mile by mile, never seeing one another, talking by intercom.

Calvin coughs. He blows smoke across the moon. "So 'the family,' now it tells us, 'Split, transfer, or take the severance buyout.' A lot of our clerks did that, over a thousand I heard. In El Paso, Phoenix, L.A., they took the \$20,000 tax-free, if they would leave. Now SP's raised it to \$50,000 — not tax-free though, if you call that a raise."

A good question. This sum, actually \$50,881.44, can come down to \$36,000 after taxes. You still have twenty months of union dues to pay off, maybe moving expenses, and then you need to locate a new place to live, look for another insurance carrier. And suppose all you know is railroading. Calvin points out again: "Find some different kind of job, at a lot lower wage, starting from scratch."

He also knows: "The '86 contract says if you've got seniority they can't make you quit. Cuts by attrition only, four percent of the workforce every profitable year, or eight percent in a year of loss. So what? The company's found a new way to get rid of you — drive you crazy on the job. Pay you to go crazy! Would you believe that's legal?"

Roger Ellsworth swivels back in his office chair. This isn't his real name, because he's not supposed to be speaking for the company. Short and blond, a neat person in the final days of his youth, once a clerk himself, Roger has risen to a lower-middle management

niche.

"Who likes this?" he wants to know. "Even our top people in San Francisco, they're split over the Rubber Rooms. Don't quote me now, but the company's liberal elements — *we recognize the pain*. But we have to be realistic, don't we? Which means, force stubborn remnants in the workforce out from under their shelter of archaic work rules to bid on other jobs available right now elsewhere in the SP system. Look, all they're trying to do is make your job as unattractive as possible so that you won't want to stay. Besides, we aren't being cruel; we're being kind. Don't they still draw their weekly paychecks?"

He swivels. He makes a teepee of his hands and joined fingertips. "We have to tell those clerks: Computers are here. Why do you refuse to understand? Keeping you on, we lose money. A lot of money, and eventually, if we keep that up, we bankrupt the railroad, and then everybody goes under. So, no blame, you're history."

He sees both sides. "How about some perspective? My father used to tell me how it was in the thirties. Amazing! Imagine, in the streets of New York or Chicago in 1933, going up to a five-cent apple-seller. It's winter and he's shivering: 'Listen, how would you like a job for over a hundred dollars a day?' 'A day? Doing what?' 'Nothing...' 'What do you mean nothing? Are you kidding?' No. And he'd find it practically impossible to believe this. 'What's the catch?' 'Well, "the torment of forced idleness." 'What!' And he'd laugh in your face, wouldn't he? 'Lead me to it!' But here in 1988, sitting in a room and collecting a hundred dollars a day is perceived as torture. Now that's crazy, don't you agree?"

"Shame, Southern Pacific!"

Maureen's cry seems wildly dated, out of a fifty-year-old *True Story Magazine*. Standing in the cluttered living room, young, pale blond, she grips her vacuum cleaner like a weapon. What about all this "family" stuff?

"After fifteen years with SP, look what they're doing to him!"

Arturo bends over their kitchen sink, the railroad clerk washing dishes, back from his night in the Rubber Room, having driven twenty miles against the morning traffic. It's seven a.m. Their daughters Nina and Kelley can be heard in the back bedroom passing through a small quarrel before school. Arturo has gone gray and slovenly. He gives Maureen a weary hug as she passes by.

"What would I tell SP?" Maureen continues. "'Isn't this a great way to treat a man!' I'd say to them: 'Tucson's our home. Why should we have to move to Los Angeles? High rents, crime, those dangerous schools...'"

Her damp curls keep falling down. Maureen wipes them away from her eyes. In front of the drainer

Arturo starts wiping his dishes. He shrugs. "There's hours left to go and you can't keep your eyes open. You've got to sleep, only never let them catch you at it. They'll cite you if they can. Sleeping on the job, hey, that's against the rules. So you just sit there and try to think of something to think about. It gets to your kidneys after a while. Like, you know, your piss gets acid, and the coffee tastes like battery acid."

"... What else does he know how to do?"

That image of the 1933 apple-seller keeps intruding. How to explain to him retroactively: if the union agrees, Arturo can give up his Southern Pacific job, and he and Maureen can get out of

this with a gross of \$50,000?

"It's crazy," Daniel Broad knows by this time. "In that office, the lights blazing down, and we're all just staring at each other." He's tall and kindly, with a pale reserve, a union rep, on the Protection Committee. Out on the depot platform by the tracks, Dan, along with Jim Dawes, Pedro Salazar, Rosa Martinez and Rick Majors (all names made up), gather for one more smoke.

The moon has started down. At the far end of the platform Calvin the fireman stands alone, hands in his pockets. As always, the rumbling and jangling from SP's railyard can be heard from

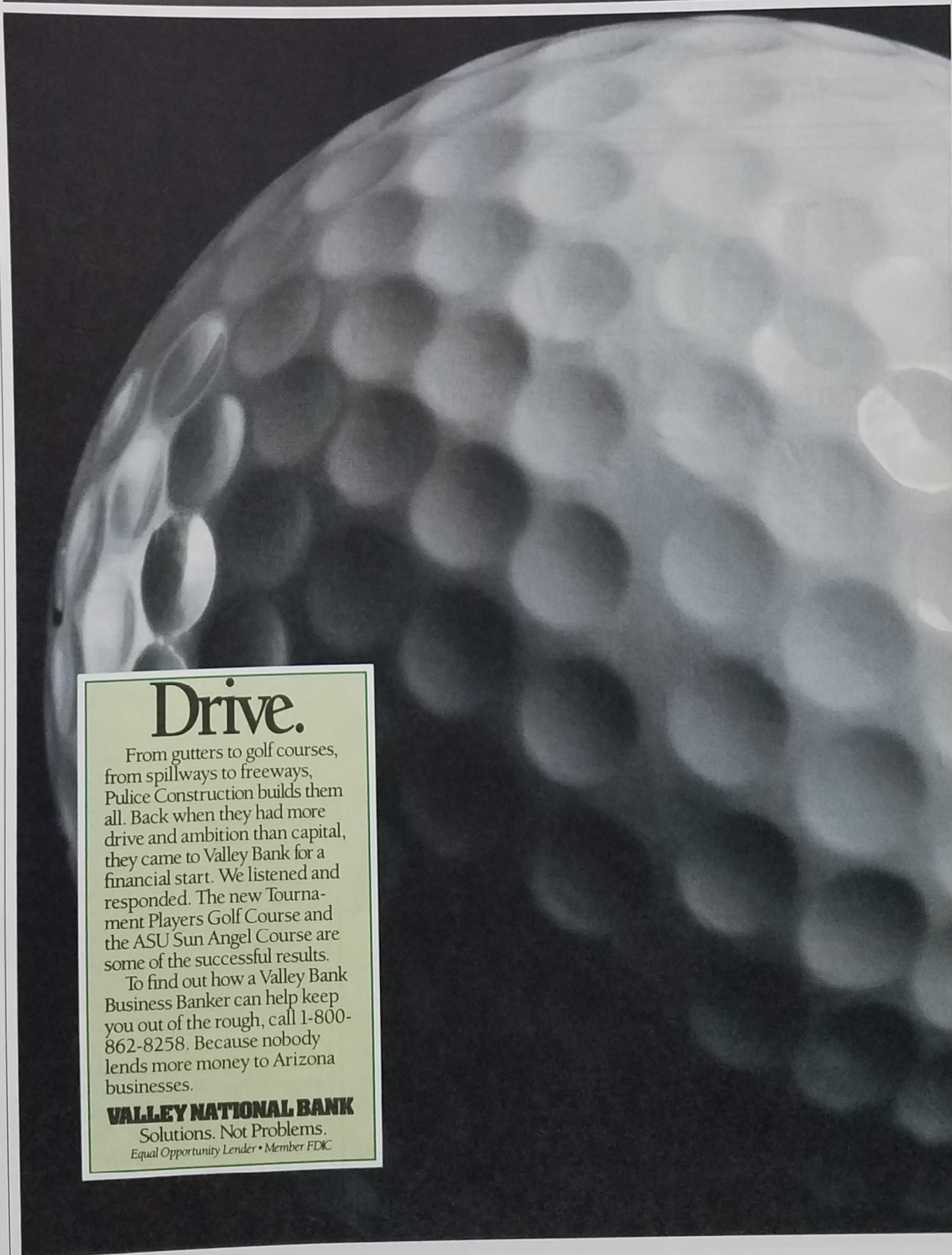
three miles away.

The night has stayed hot and clear. Their voices mingle just above a whisper.

"I'm not going to sit here and go berserk. You have to take chances, cheat, sneak your magazines, sneak books, sneak music. That's why we take turns on lookout, so they can't surprise us."

"Night after night you lose ambition. Get catatonic. Your confidence goes down. I'm afraid to go out and compete again. I know I shouldn't keep taking that hundred dollars...."

"It makes you lazy off the job too. It infects you. My wife starts to get on me, what's wrong with you? Do this,



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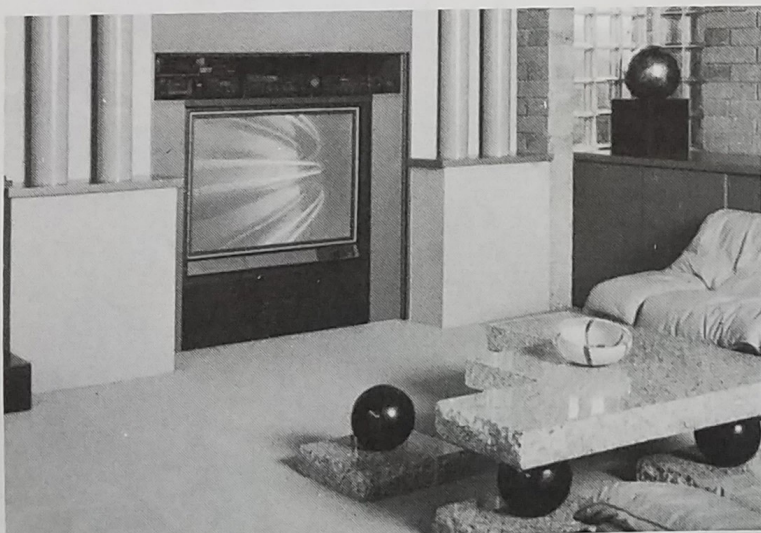
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do that, take out the garbage. I tell her to stuff it. I tell my kids, shut up. I sit and watch TV and fall asleep, I'm so damned tired."

"The union, they had a doctor come around. He says if we want to file a sick claim, we have to prove to the medical board that being down here every night 'aggravates a previous condition,' like an ulcer. But that's hard to prove. So meanwhile...."

"Every two minutes you meet one of these guys on his way to the john."

"Oh yeah, we piss a lot. To keep sane, you know."

Rosa drags on her cigarette. "Every night I come down here in dread. All night long, watching that clock, to collect my hundred dollars. I'd scream if they would let me. I got an idea of killing myself, like that Burlington Northern guy, up in Montana or wherever he was. That got their attention, anyway. They closed the Rubber Room up there after he did that. Of course, they said it was 'circumstantial' — nothing to do with SP."

"Sometimes we slip out back and watch that bar close across the street. It's two a.m., and the other night this

God's sake, against the supervisors coming into our offices, and taking work off the desks, and confiscating our files, and making us stop doing any work at all."

Her little girl begins nuzzling and crying. Beth walks up and down, rocking her.

"Talk about cruel and unusual punishment. In Phoenix, they put one of our guys in the yard office in the middle of August up on the third floor, no air-conditioning, and left him alone there with only the company rule book to read. If you treat a dog that way, the ASPCA would at least make you give him a chew-toy."

"Remember, every time they get one of our people to quit a job, or accept the buyout, SP can abolish that job forever. So that's why we forced them to limit the buyouts, which we wouldn't if they agreed not to blank out the job, but of course they won't."

"Oh, it's not just here in Tucson. In Roseville, that's a yard in California, the clerks in the Rubber Room showed up for work with Prisoner of War insignia on their shirts, and POW buttons. The company said no, take those things

*If you treat a dog that way,
the ASPCA would at least make you
give him a chew-toy.*

guy comes running out to the corner. He keeps banging his head on the STOP sign. After a while he gets out this Boy Scout knife and cuts his wrist. You could see the blood. Then his buddy, a real big guy, comes out and grabs him and carries him over his shoulder, but then at the stoplight they fall down together in a heap, and get up and fall down again. It's awful to watch, you know, but still better than doing nothing."

Beth DeHart isn't afraid to use her name. She's district chairwoman of the Transportation Communication Union from Yuma to El Paso, a clerk too, but working. According to federal law, she can't be penalized by the company for speaking out on union affairs.

Small and supple, Beth nurses a six-week-old baby girl. The bungalow in one of Tucson's suburbs smells of infant urine and Johnson's Baby Powder. While breast-feeding, she answers the phone. The union's chief negotiator is in a San Francisco hospital for hernia surgery. She fills him in on SP's latest position paper. Hanging up, nursing still, she has to agree: "Sure, those Rubber Rooms... We ought to have covered this kind of harassment in the '86 contract. But nobody ever dreamed the SP would pull something like this; that we'd have to specify a rule, for

off. So next shift they reported with black arm bands. 'No, no, they're against the rules too.' Rules! All you can do is keep your sense of humor. Show them they're not getting to us. But morale's falling apart. Harassment for every little thing. One of our clerks, she told the supervisor — he'd been getting on her case all day long — 'Hey, kiss me where the sun don't shine!' Naturally, he cited her. Joan claimed she was only inviting him to have an affair in Alaska, but nobody bought that, and she was fired."

Ten years ago Beth graduated from Arizona State, an English major. Now with the baby girl in her arms, you can imagine her as one of those pioneering heroines on a militant labor poster in the thirties.

No, not quite that militant. Her smile quickly passes.

"Look! Those clerks, they're not rebels. Just people asking for fair treatment. Only that SP should live up to the agreement with us. There aren't any Luddites out there."

She's speaking of the dispossessed knitters and cloth workers of Lancashire, England, who in 1811 formed masked gangs and went about smashing the new textile machinery. No such radicals lie in wait for Southern Pacific, not yet anyway. Beth hasn't been told of grand revolutionary visions, of attacking computers with axes or old

shoes. Everybody in the clerk's union understands that it's hopeless to try smashing a computer system; that the information these terminals store and transmit will always be redundant and backed up through eternity.

"Sure, the computers by themselves, they're not malignant, not evil; they're here to stay on the railroad." Beth and the TCU have had to make their peace with that. "We know, some day we'll be replaced. But, gradually, and humanely, by attrition, the way the company promised.... Well, who knows? Maybe this Anschutz guy will come in like a knight on horseback, and fix things up."

He may not be aware of it, but Philip Anschutz, who acquired Southern Pacific in October 1988, has already become a legend among Tucson's SP workers — especially the outcast clerks in the Rubber Room.

In its October 31, 1988 issue, *Forbes* magazine headed a story about him this way:

Gone to a movie lately? Then you plunked down more cash than Denver billionaire Philip Anschutz parted with to buy the giant Southern Pacific.

Anschutz is a forty-eight-year-old Denver billionaire, and according to *Forbes*, what he did was leverage the buy and saddle debt holders with most of the risk. Noted *Forbes*, "This, of course, is a major way the rich get richer, and the secretive forty-eight-year-old Anschutz, whose vast interests include oil, real estate and art, is one of the richest...."

But SP's beleaguered workers have heard about another Philip Anschutz: a railroad buff who rides on his own trains; who appears among them, inspecting Southern Pacific installations in disguise. One rumor has him in a railroad cap and old clothes. Another story describes him carrying a backpack. In all these accounts from such remote places as Gila Bend there appears a Good Joe Tycoon. Lately, according to rumor, he came upon one supervisor brutally berating a junior employee, and that supervisor was fired on the spot. This story has since been amended: the supervisor is not yet fired, but remains in danger of it. Philip Anschutz arrives not on horseback but in his Mercedes, it's said, and changes clothes in the back seat into humble work habits — before suddenly dropping in on engine yards and offices to find out for himself what's going on. The employees who claim to have encountered him believe that this corporate knight will do something about Southern Pacific's unfair labor practices, and close the Rubber Rooms.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard... Consider her ways and be wise... How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?....
— Proverbs 6:6

If Philip Anschutz had chanced to

look in on Tucson's Rubber Room last August, according to Dan Broad, he might have observed this:

"We were sitting around as usual when one of our guys, I won't say who, pointed at the floor and said: 'Hey, look at those little buggers.'"

It was a straggling line of ants carrying bits of grain and leaves outside. They'd found a crack in the door jamb, and carried these bits out to the platform. And the clerks in the Rubber Room stood around and watched them, and Dan Broad said to himself, "Oh, boy. This is what we've stooped to." It was about eleven o'clock on a hot

night, so the clerks got out lawn chairs that they'd illegally brought and sat outside on the platform and kept watching the ants do their work.

"Then this company man, the supervisor Maxwell (not his name), came out and looked at us," Dan Broad said. "I was the only union rep present, and he asked me: 'What are you people doing out here?' and I answered, 'Well, watching these ants, as you can see.'"

"He thought about this and went away. Then he came back and he said, 'Do you consider what you're wearing out here, shorts and sandals, proper attire on shift?' 'Well, I told him,

'there's no shift, no job, and you took our work away, so what's the difference?' 'Shorts,' he said, 'and those thongs on your feet: you know they're against regulations.' I said to him, 'Look, it's ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit out here. Shorts at midnight, no trains due in, who's to see? That's a dress code you can't enforce.' About the thongs though, he had us. There's a rule about not wearing sandals on duty, because they can get wedged in between the ties and the tracks. I wanted to tell him, bullshit, but that would be in violation of Rule 607 — no using profane or vulgar language, for

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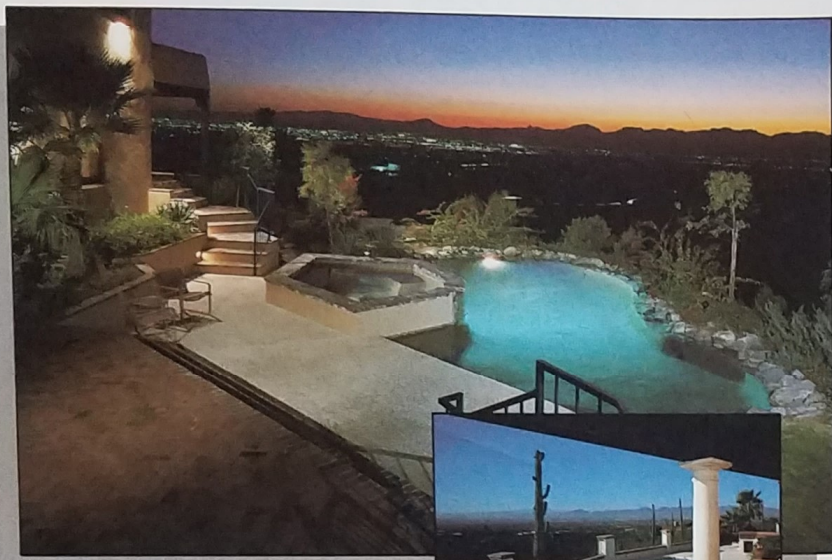
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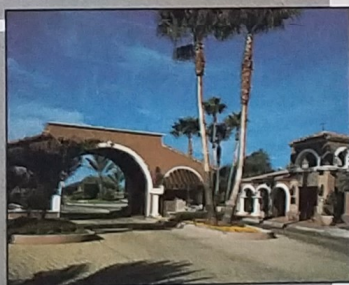
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which he could cite me, I knew. So I had to answer him, without too much respect in my voice, I hope: 'All right, after tonight, no sandals, okay?' And he walked on down the platform."

It's October now, going on six months after Southern Pacific first imposed the Rubber Rooms on its "surplus employees."

Alongside the tracks Calvin the fireman, under the gun himself, stands alone at half-past midnight. "Oh, SP will break 'em," he knows. "No way they won't, you'll see."

Tucson's ten clerks still sit, drawing their hundred dollars a night.

"Thanksgiving next, then Christmas," Rosa Martinez wonders. "How are they going to decorate the Rubber Room for us? What with? A little fir tree, K-mart snow, tinsel and celluloid balls? Well, Happy Holiday, we can tell them. We're still around!"

But she's mistaken. For many days the Tucson holdouts haven't known: In San Francisco a regional agreement has been signed by their union and Southern Pacific. SP didn't wait for Anschutz to take over. That four percent attrition

"Don't be so formal in your dealings with employees; get down on the ground... get down and get dirty, get real in today's world."

agreement is dead. SP can let you go without regard for it. Accept the \$50,000 buyout or leave town, or give up railroading — these are your choices now. Did the Knight on Horseback connive in this, or did management bring it off behind his back? Rumors fly but nobody knows. The outcome is now plain to the clerks in the Rubber Room.

Trains rumble in the yards, warning lights flash, diesel horns sound, and one more midnight passes. Nobody's in the Rubber Room anymore but Dan Broad. He sits alone. His will be the last job to go.

"Off to Sacramento, I guess," he concedes finally. "SP's short-handed there. My wife, my kids don't like it, but..."

In the yards nothing has changed. For Dan and the other clerks everything has. Their union agreed with SP regionally, on a higher level. After all these months the Tucson holdouts lost, and will be terminated, or bumped and scattered.

"Anyway, they had to promise they're never going to harass us like that again." It's confirmed, in writing:

"Positions with minimal or no duties will not be established for the purpose of... forcing employees to make decisions regarding separation or relocation which they would otherwise not have to make...."

"But you lost, didn't you?"

"What do you mean?"

"You put up a good fight for six months, but you lost."

"Let me answer your question with a question," Beth DeHart replies. "Did Spartacus lose?"

Spartacus, who led the slaves of Rome in their Gladiatorial War against their masters' tyranny, and almost won until he fell in battle in 71 B.C. — but later, thanks to Stanley Kubrick and Kirk Douglas, made it to immortality in the 1960 A.D. film of his same name.

It's two weeks before Christmas. Southern Pacific has closed its Rubber Rooms one by one, the last of them shutting down a week ago.

Late today a hard rain fell. Wet and gleaming, the shacks, roundhouses and control tower of Tucson's Southern Pacific yard are now frosted. Even in Southern Arizona, December nights turn cold. Flames have started up in the trash barrels. SP's yard workers gather around them. Several homeless people have just crossed the tracks, and now join them around the trash fires, warming their hands.

Wait, though....

On November 16, a staff meeting has been held in Denver, attended by the Operating Department officers of both the Rio Grande and Southern Pacific lines. Representing the new management under Philip Anschutz, General Chairman Ken Moore of the railroads' Labor Organizations unit addressed this group.

He brings them "some philosophies, ideas and perceptions that will serve to change the image of our management style..."

This is his message:

"... Harassment, demeaning mental cruelty — I do not like or believe in these words or actions that relate to them.

"We need to open up our doors, draw back the shutters, and let some fresh air into our dealings with our employees and with each other.

"... The reasons for our structure of disciplinary measures no longer make sense. Discipline should always be an educational tool, not a punitive measure.... Don't be so formal in your dealings with employees; get down on the ground, listen to them, talk, and relate to their experiences, relate your own experiences to them, get down and get dirty, get real in today's world.

"... Remember, I will not tolerate the personal maltreatment of our employees in any form whatsoever...."

"I am charging all of you to be responsible, treat people with respect...."

"If you cannot get enthusiastic about railroading today, you should probably look for other employment...."

Perhaps it has occurred to some of these managers: a new black box may shortly be in place, and finally in the computer age they're mostly all clerks too, unprotected, with the lights of their own obsolescence winking behind them.

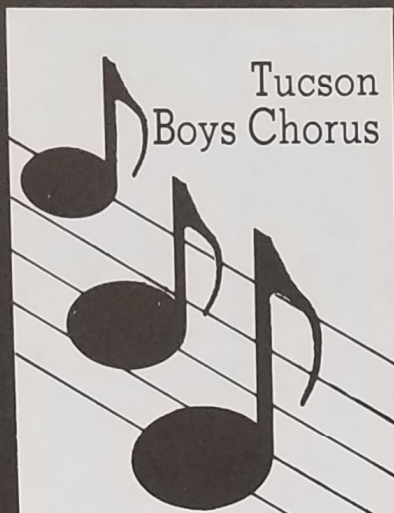
What has really happened, SP yard employees ask? Under Philip Anschutz, have Southern Pacific employee relations truly changed?

Beth DeHart says: "Well, things have changed somewhat for the better. The middle managers, they perform their lateral arabesques to cover their — well, they smile more. You can see them wondering about what Ken Moore said and asking themselves: 'Is this for real?' We wonder too, and hope. After all, these are our jobs. We want to believe."

From San Francisco, Bob Brackbill, general chairman of the TCU, is more optimistic. "It's better, management is changing. Not all, some still hope to hold out for the old ways, but Ken Moore has been educating them. He wants to do what is honest and right. He and Mr. Anschutz regularly talk to the union reps. They recognize that SP's greatest asset is loyal employees valued by the company."

What then? Has SP suddenly entered a new dawn of enlightenment in its employee relations? Did the clerks' holdout make a difference? One year after the creation of the Rubber Rooms, the answer should become clear soon enough. □

Novelist and essayist Alan Harrington won a first place in the 1987 Arizona Press Club awards for his essay, *Juan and Jack*, also published in *City Magazine*.



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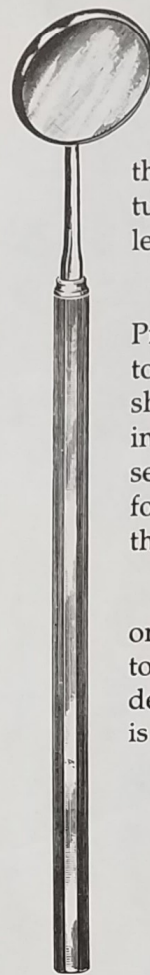
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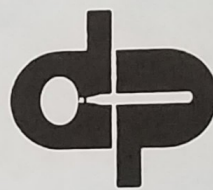
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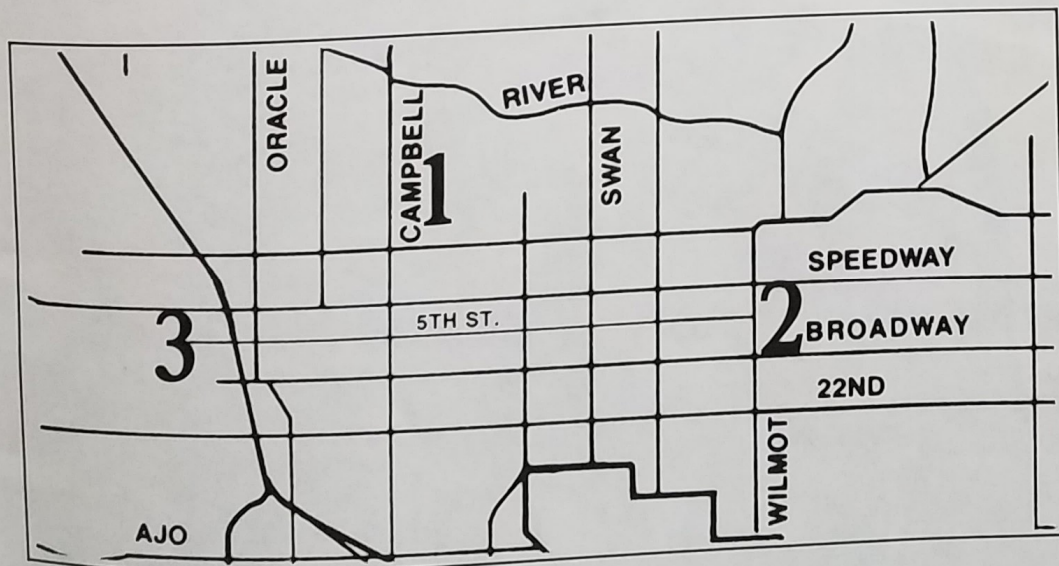
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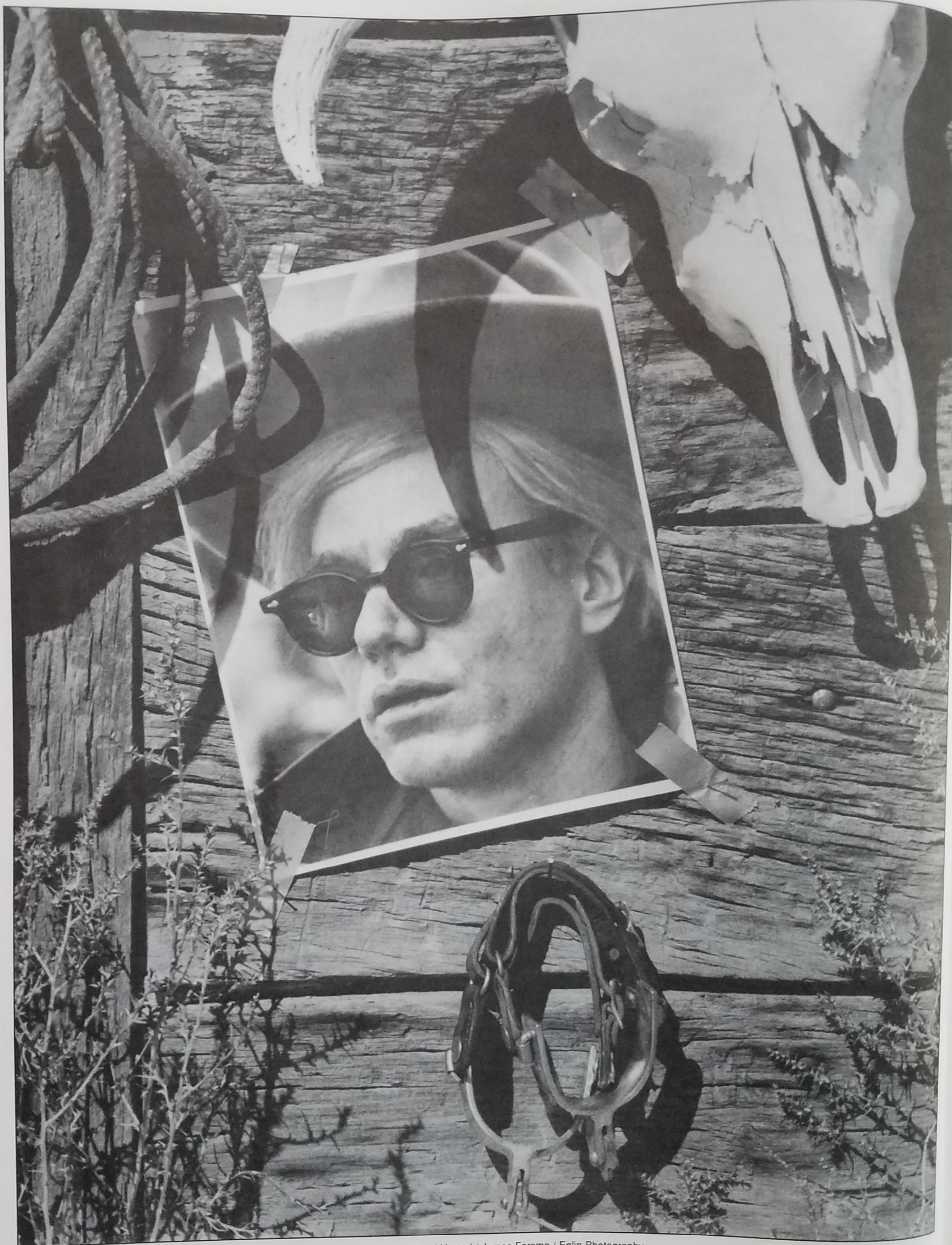


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WARHOL

When Andy Warhol came to Tucson, we did what any decent town would do. We called the sheriff.

Andy Warhol, America's leading pop artist and independent filmmaker, will appear in person at the Jewish Community Center, 102 N. Plumer, Nov. 5, 8:00 p.m. in conjunction with Cinema I Film Services.

Using two screens, Mr. Warhol will show excerpts from his film, *Chelsea Girls*. A discussion period will follow the screening....

— Press Release, November 1967

It was the winter of 1967, and Andy Warhol was touring college campuses. It was my third year as director of Cinema I, a film program at the JCC. Like me, my staff members, Caryl Rowe, Bob Campbell and Carlos Bustamante, were insatiable film buffs and risk-takers. We screened independent, avant-garde and classical films, followed by open discussions with the audience. We were free to book anything we wanted to see, indulging four diverse and eclectic tastes. Films such as *Wavelength* and filmmakers like Fassbinder and Dreyer were unknown in Tucson in the sixties. We showed them all. It was film-buff heaven, and it later led to a grant from the American Film Institute to open the first regional film school in Arizona, the Arizona Film Project.

Andy Warhol was booked for a personal appearance at Arizona State University in Tempe on Nov. 4. Warhol's agent contacted the University of Arizona to ask about a date here on the next day. UA said no. I then called New York and made a deal to bring him to Tucson on Nov. 5 for a fee of \$500 (the initial request was for \$1,000), and even that was more than we could afford. The JCC director, Henry Pitt, and I both felt it was a good risk. There was no fear of censorship at the Center and no red tape so we sailed ahead, looking forward to meeting the man who had predicted, "In the future, everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes...."

In the mid-sixties Andy Warhol was not yet a household word. The celebrity silk screens were beginning to emerge, along with a few films bearing strange titles such as *Vinyl*, *Sleep*, *Kill* and *Empire*. People with the equally strange names of Viva, Ultra Violet, Vera Cruise, Ingrid Superstar (a word he coined) and Billy Name were part of his entourage. He was beginning to attract media attention. The latest wrinkle was an imposter named Alan Midgett, who had passed himself off as Andy Warhol on

by
**Shirley
Pasternack**

several college campuses in Oregon and Utah — with Andy's full knowledge and authorization. The hoax was discovered and the press ate it up. I found it amusing.

Andy later explained his entourage this way: "I always took a group of superstars with me to the colleges where I had 'speaking engagements,' because I was too shy and scared to talk myself — the superstars would do all the talking and answer all the questions from the audience and I would just be sitting quietly onstage like a good mystique. It wasn't exactly a 'lecture' we were giving — it was more like a talk show with a dummied-up host."

On Nov. 5, I picked up Andy and "superstars" Viva, Paul Morrissey and Taylor Mead at Tucson International Airport. Andy, wearing blue jeans and a beat-up brown leather jacket, looked frail. Under his silvered wig and trademark dark glasses was a skin of almost shocking pallor. He was pleasant and very polite, but his handshake was limp. I learned later that he hated to be touched. He was clutching a UHER tape recorder that seemed much too heavy for him. He carried it everywhere and taped continuously.

The show was scheduled for eight o'clock that evening, leaving them with a few hours to kill. Andy asked if I knew of a cheap historic hotel, something like the Chelsea in New York, where they could stay the night. I drove them to the Geronimo. They pranced into the lobby, took one look and fell in love with the place. The old-timers sitting around smoking in beat-up easy chairs took one look at the "superstars" dressed variously in drag, feathers and purple satin shirts, and gaped in disgust and disbelief. The desk clerk quickly declared the hotel fully booked. Ironically, the entourage wound up at the Hilton.

Paul Morrissey, listed as Andy's assistant producer, was also technical advisor and cinematogra-

pher. (Today he is an independent writer and director.) He wanted to check the equipment at the center an hour before the show. I picked them up at seven o'clock. Andy was still lugging the tape recorder and continually fussing with it. He seemed technically incompetent, and Paul had to adjust it. I wondered if that was the reason his movies like *Empire*, *Eat* and *Sleep* ran for four, five and six hours, with little camera adjustment.

That approach briefly intrigued me, and I was later inspired to make a film of my cat washing herself for four consecutive days with my Super-8 camera.

At the center, Andy & Co. set up the sound system and dual screens. There were no posters on the walls of the huge auditorium, and Andy thought they looked too bare. He offered to put up a dozen silk-screened Campbell's Soup Can posters around the room. He said we could sell them for fifteen dollars apiece and donate the money to charity. He signed them all.

By eight, the auditorium was packed. We sold out. Hippies, society matrons, film buffs, critics and curiosity seekers all converged, not knowing what to expect.

What they got was clips from *Chelsea Girls* on the dual screens. The running time of the full film is over three hours, comprising twelve episodes in which various members of the entourage play at being themselves in beguiling ways, talking, combing each other's hair, lounging or staring directly into the camera without saying a word. Compared to *Sleep* (Andy's six-hour epic about a man sleeping), this was real drama. Perhaps because he was so introverted, Andy always picked people who were narcissistic and extroverted for his films. It was also real Warhol, the camera waiting for the "actor" to reveal his or her persona. When Andy said, "I love to be bored," he really meant it.

The Tucson audience was not amused.

After the screening, Andy, Viva, Alan Midgett and Paul Morrissey walked on stage to answer questions. At first the audience was polite. People asked predictable questions: Why don't you have some "action" in your films? Why doesn't the camera ever move? Andy must have heard the same questions a hundred times. He answered them politely,

in a very calm, soft-spoken manner. People strained to hear. Then one of Tucson's pillars of society (who shall remain anonymous) stood up and began an outraged condemnation of Warhol, his work, his lifestyle and his films. She baited him, insulted him and wouldn't shut up: Why are your actors so stupid? Don't you know what real art is? You're such a fool! Andy remained cool and answered all her questions; I'm sure he'd been through this before, too. But I was afraid if we didn't cut off the program at this point, all hell would break loose. You could feel the tension, and the audience was growing restless and noisy. Suddenly, a little old lady in the audience grabbed a Campbell's Soup poster off the wall and ran out with it. Someone yelled, "Get her!" This was my cue to stop the show. I was embarrassed and depressed. Tucson just wasn't ready for Andy Warhol.

No one else was interested in the Campbell's Soup posters. None were sold and Andy had to take them all back except for the one he gave me and the one that was stolen.

Later, I learned that Andy had loved every minute of the debacle. He was joking and laughing and proclaiming, as only he can say it, "Fabulous!"

I understood why years later, when I read *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol (From A to B and Back Again)*. Andy wrote: "Sometimes people let the same problem make them miserable for years when they could just say, 'So what.' That's one of my favorite things to say, 'So what.' I don't know how I made it through the years before I learned to do that trick. It took a long time for me to learn it, but once you do, you never forget."

The idea for Andy's second and still more tumultuous visit to Tucson was born while he watched a lawn being mowed during that overnight stop. According to Viva, whose tribute to the artist was published in the *Village Voice* in 1987, Andy was standing on the balcony of the Hilton, watching a man cut the winter grass. "Gee, I bet it's a really nice life to do that," he said. "Out in the sun all day in a nice, warm climate. I think I might like to do that."

"Me too," Viva replied. "In fact, I'm not getting on the plane unless you promise me we can come back and make a movie."

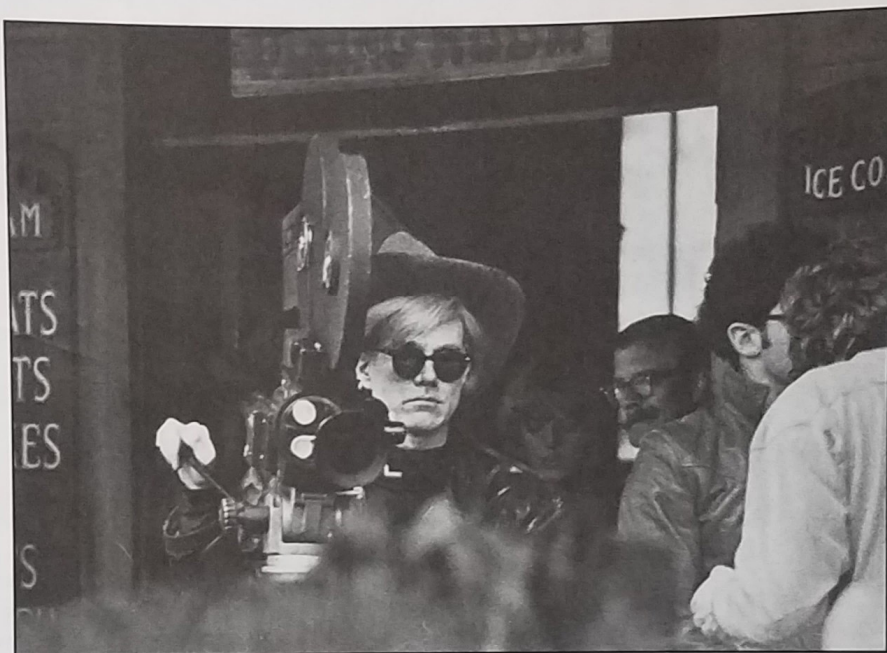
A few weeks later I got a call from Andy asking me to scout a location for a western. As always, his timing was perfect: a group of artists and UA faculty members had just purchased Rancho Linda Vista in Oracle, a commune-like mountainside retreat in what was then an undeveloped, quiet, blue-collar, churchgoing community, where everyone minded his own business yet viewed artists with some suspicion. When Charles Littler and the other artists heard that Andy Warhol wanted to film a western in Tucson, they generously offered him the use of their

ranch. They also said that he could use all the guest cottages for the crew for the ten-day shoot.

It was one of the wildest experiences I ever encountered in the making of a film, and it cemented a friendship with Andy that would last until his death nineteen years later.

Andy flew directly from Copenhagen where his one-man show had closed. Three of the "superstars" drove out from New York with Vera Cruise and were already here when Andy and the rest of the crew arrived. Vera's driving was a story in itself, one related best by Andy in his book *Popism, The Warhol 60's*: "Vera always drove around in

Tucson and rented the horses. Frankie Francine, the entourage's transvestite, scoured the town for a pair of high heels to wear in the film, and came back grumbling that nobody had any size twelves. Finally, I drove Andy, Paul, Viva and Taylor Mead out to the set. Meeting us there were Joe Dallesandro, Lou Walden, Alan Midgette, Eric Emerson, Julian Burroughs (identified as author William Burroughs' son) and Tom Hompertz, a blond surfer from San Diego State College who was picked up while Andy was on tour. Neophyte Tom was to play the lead cowboy, Romeo. "They tell me we have a script. I haven't seen it yet." Taylor



Andy Warhol filming at Old Tucson, 1968.

lots of different cars, very flashy Jaguars and other sports models. She knew how to rip a whole car apart and assemble it back together. She was Puerto Rican but her accent was heavy New York/Brooklyn. Every year she went to Arizona for her health. She was such an odd sight to see, under five feet with short boyish dark hair and a sickly cough, in a black leather motorcycle jacket that she usually wore over a white nurse's uniform. The next year she was arrested for car theft. Everybody told me, 'Oh, come on, don't play dumb—you knew that Vera did that! My God, she even told you!' But when a person comes right out and tells you, 'I steal cars,' the way Vera had, somehow you don't think they're serious."

Vera, Eric Ericson and crushed-car sculptor John Chamberlain picked Andy and the others up at the airport in an antique bus that Truly Nolen had loaned them in exchange for publicity. She didn't steal the bus, but Chamberlain destroyed it. I was told that he drove like a maniac and burned the engine out. I still feel guilty about that whenever I see a Truly Nolen car around town. If Nolen only had known what sort of sculpture Chamberlain was into, he wouldn't have been so generous.

Now that the whole crew was here, Andy arranged a two-day shoot at Old

Mead swore that there was a script in New York, now reduced to three pages of ideas.

The film, *Lonesome Cowboys*, has been described as a "four-hour genderless western using Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* as the taking-off point for an inverse transsexual metaphor." In plainer English, Andy simply wanted to make a film about male narcissism—and cowboys seemed to him to be the ideal vehicle. It was never quite clear why Shakespeare had to be involved. Someone asked that of Viva, who played Juliet. She replied, "I think William would have wanted it this way."

The local press was very kind. Tucson Citizen staff writer Dan Pavillard had a wonderful time interviewing the crew and writing about it. He had a great sense of humor, and was a fine writer. He wrote an articulate spoof for the *Citizen* headed:

Romeo and Juliet: Warhol, '68 Wherefore art thou, script?

Under a photograph of John Chamberlain and Andy (in a real cowboy hat), Pavillard wrote, "John Chamberlain, a sculptor-photographer-technical advisor, discusses with Warhol what to do next. Upshot? Nothing. Chamberlain wore a feather in his hair, silver jacket, purple striped pants, black

patent leather shoes and 'ultraviolet' eye shadow (his initials in matching color on the jacket)."

Under another photo of Viva and Taylor, Pavillard wrote, "Taylor Mead, whose role lacks definition at this point, performs with Viva on the street of Old Tucson. Viva appears in English riding habit because, 'I've just awakened from a bad LSD trip and I think I'm in West Virginia.'"

Pavillard described a scene from the filming that day: "Morrissey was finally ready for action. The Montagues mounted up—for the first time ever—and plodded out of sight. Windmilling, Morrissey's fingers caught in his hair, slipped through, broke free to point at Viva and Mead emerging as drunks from the Old Tucson chapel. With Warhol manning the camera, the pair tripped through the rain toward Morrissey. 'Walk toward the barrel,' he yelled, 'the Barrel!' he screamed. Andy chewed his gum. Never let up on the camera."

In another scene, the cowboys rode into town and halted in front of the saloon, where Viva was flailing the anemic-looking Mead with a riding crop. She turned to the cowboys and began to scream insults: "You're disgusting, probably impotent! To touch you would be revolting! I can't stand men who don't have long hair." Mead, standing behind her, giggled and echoed the insults, all the while making it clear he would be delighted if the cowboys were to dismount and beat him up. The cowboys, however, ignored them and continued riding through the dusty streets, discussing ballet exercise and how one is to get more zing in the pelvis while walking. Their only interest was in their own bodies.

A tourist barged onto the porch out of the rain. To no one in particular, he asked, "Are you kidding?"

Barry Sadler, the hell-for-leather paratrooper/singer/actor, happened to be playing a featured role in a "Death Valley Days" episode being shot around the corner on Old Tucson's sound stage 1. At one point he walked past Warhol, who was between takes and was standing against a wall. Snarled Sadler, "If I had a flyswatter...."

The crew returned to work, and Viva continued sputtering her insults—including the MF-word. I was standing on the side of the set with a group of spectators, my teenage children and their friends, when I caught the end of a conversation between two women who worked at Old Tucson. "Did you hear what she said?" asked one. "Disgusting!" said the other.

My heart sank. I had a premonition of what was about to happen. And it did.

Andy wasn't allowed to finish shooting at Old Tucson the next day. It seems that along with the employees, some tourists who came in to watch the filming also complained about the foul language.

In *Popism*, Andy recalled it this way: "Eventually, the grips, the electrician and the people who build sets formed a vigilante committee to run us out of town, just like in a real cowboy movie. We were all standing on the drugstore porch, except Eric, who was doing his ballet exercises at the hitching post when a group of them came over and said, 'You perverted Easterners, go back the hell where you came from.'"

Viva told them off, employing roughly the same vocabulary she had used on camera.

For the rest of that day, they monitored every move we made. The sheriff came in a helicopter and stood on top of the water tower with binoculars, watching to see if any actors took their clothes off. Pretty soon Andy and the crew tired of the hassle and decided to move the shoot out to Rancho Linda Vista.

In spite of the controversy Andy provoked, there were a few people in Tucson who wanted to meet him. The Tucson Press Club had scheduled an entertainment forum in the club's quarters in the Transamerica Building, which was open to members and their guests. They invited Andy along with Paul, Viva and Taylor Mead for the 5:30 p.m. meeting. Also appearing were the East Lee Street Tub and Jug Band with vocalist Candelabra Hat-fetish, singer Toni Lee Scott, and the Show-Offs. I was unable to attend, but Andy and the crew had a good time and he loved the names of the other entertainers. They were almost as good as the ones he gave his "superstars."

Evelyn and Arthur Bittker, who owned the El Dorado Lodge at Speedway and Wilmot, were very interested in meeting Andy Warhol. Evelyn invited us all out for dinner and asked Andy to bring several crew members. The Bittkers, who had operated a guest ranch in the Catskills before moving to Tucson, were used to celebrities. Their ranch catered to the rich and famous; pictures of Eleanor Roosevelt, John Dewey, Natalie Wood, James Dean and Paul Newman graced the walls. Andy was impressed. He loved celebrities, Hollywood, the whole bit.

The buffet dinner was fabulous and the pastries made by the Swiss chef were legendary. Andy, who loved chocolate, tried them all. He piled his plate with Black Forest cake, Bavarian cream roll, hazelnut meringue, Nesselrode cake and chestnut mousse, sharing them with Viva, Paul and Taylor. Everyone was in a relaxed, cheerful, even ebullient mood. Andy autographed an article in *Realities* magazine about him for Evelyn. He signed it: "With love and kisses, Andy Warhol."

The evening was marred by an incident that could only happen to Andy Warhol.

My daughter Rachael and her friend Andy Gaudielle offered to drive Andy and the others back to Oracle.

Everyone piled into Gaudielle's Land Rover, Rachael and Viva in front with the driver; Andy, Paul and Taylor in the back. When they stopped for a traffic light, two hot rods pulled up next to them. When the rodders spotted this strange, pale creature with a silver wig, they started screaming obscenities. When the cars started moving again, they tried to run the Land Rover off the road. Andy was terrified. He slid down in the seat. It was getting scary. Gaudielle whipped out his machete, which he kept under the driver's seat, and waved it at the punks. When Andy saw the blade, he pleaded with Gaudielle, "Please, don't, please, no violence. Please stop it!" He was visibly shaken.

The other car drove off.

How ironic that this very gentle man who so feared violence was shot only five months after he left Tucson.

Sunday dawned damp and dreary, but Andy had no choice but to go on filming at Oracle.

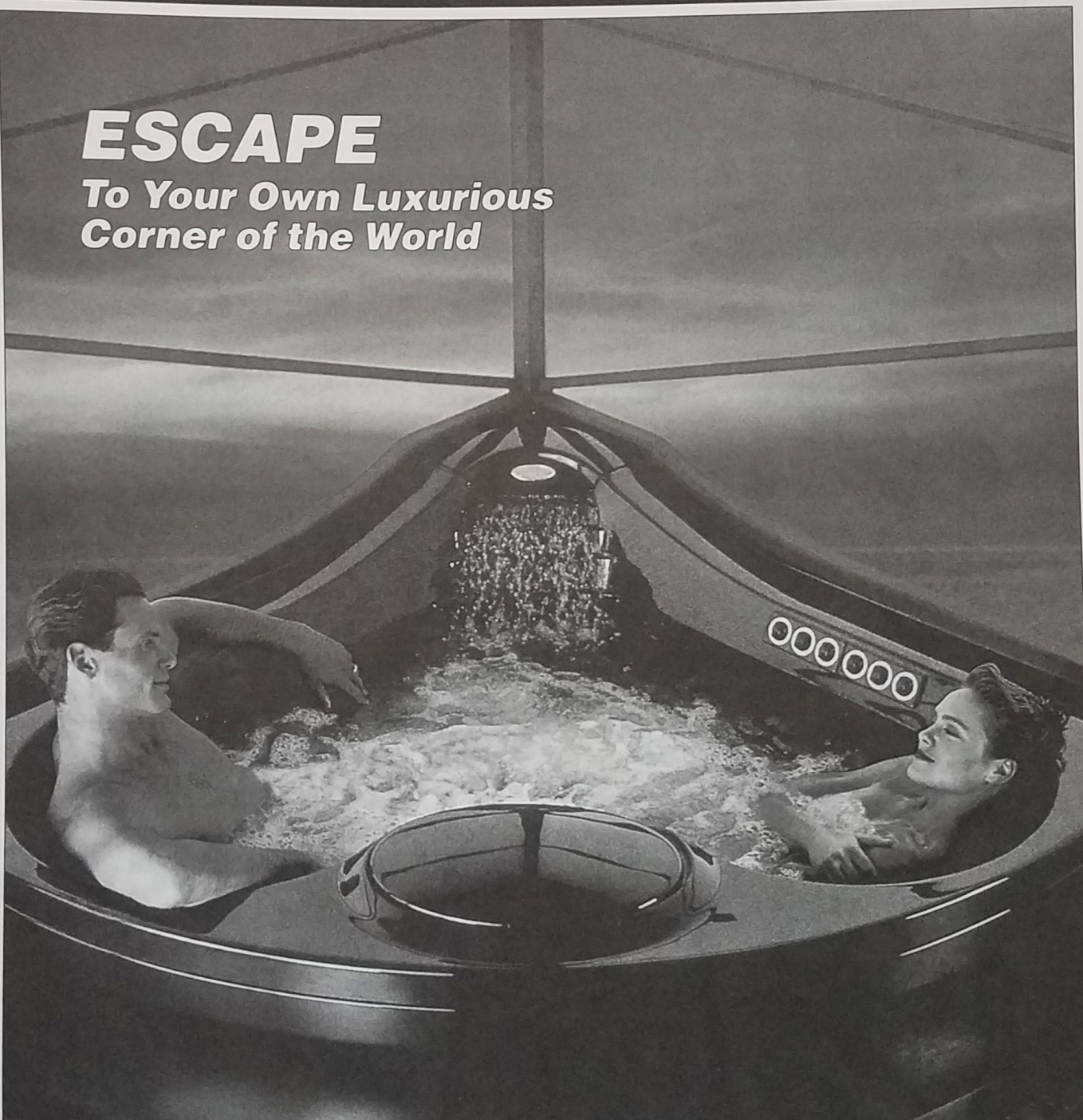
The rape scene, where Viva is "raped" by a group of Shakespearean cowboys, was ready to shoot. The ground was wet and muddy, but time was running out and Andy had other commitments. He decided to go ahead with the pivotal scene.

In the meantime, word had filtered around Oracle that a film was being made at Linda Vista, and what a treat for the children to learn how movies are

made. First came church, but why not stop by afterwards to watch the filming? About four couples dropped by with their children and joined the friendly crowd of artists and Warhol followers. Several onlookers had cameras and were filming Andy filming.

The "rape" scene began with the cowboys riding up to the corral in a drizzle. One knocked Viva down; another flung aside the panting, delirious Taylor Mead. It was a very strange "rape." The fully clothed cowboys simulated an assault on the nude Viva, all the while virtually ignoring her and talking to each other about unrelated matters. Peter Gidal, an authority and exponent of Warhol's work, later ex-

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plained it like this: "In a film wholly absorbed in nudity and its meaning, the naked Viva is violated by men fully clothed and buttoned up. Never does flesh touch flesh. It is all buffo shadow play. This is no display of violent, cruel passion. Its function is purely negative: it attempts to associate desire with precisely nothing at all. Under the facade of rape, the episode is finally a statement of how deeply Viva is not wanted."

The unsuspecting churchgoers stood frozen in horror as this scene unfolded. They weren't thinking about its "statement." I heard one exclaim, "My God, it's a rape scene!" Then they spun their kids around and fled for their cars.

The repercussions of Andy's permissiveness in letting anyone who wanted to watch him work were to haunt him for a long time after he left Tucson.

The citizens of Oracle felt threatened by these crazy and uninhibited Easterners. They did what any good citizen would do: they called the sheriff. When the law came to check things out, someone caught the whiff of marijuana in one of the cabins. The sheriff called the FBI. Then the feds began looking into charges of interstate transportation of obscene matter.

Andy was very upset about all this "nonsense," as he called it. "Why didn't they go after the real pornography — the hard-core stuff, rated XXXX," he wondered. "Why pick on me?"

When he got back to New York, he dropped me a note:

Dear Shirley,
Thank you for being so great to us when we were in Tucson. We appreciate your helpfulness. I am sending a silk screen of Marilyn Monroe soon. The FBI were here. I hope nothing happens.
Andy

Quoting Robert Atkins in a recent issue of *Village Voice*: "Like almost

everything having to do with Warhol, his FBI file lives on. In 1977, the Carter White House requested a summary of it, although it is unclear if any action was taken by the President or his staff." In 1988, Margia Kramer opened Andy's FBI file and published this material in an Unsub Press book called *Warhol, et al.*, and in May, Kramer will recontextualize it in an installation called *I, a Woman: The FBI File on Andy Warhol*, debuting at Art Space in San Francisco.

The last day in Tucson was spent shopping. Andy wanted to look for bargains in all the thrift stores, so Viva, Taylor, Paul, Andy and I went up and down North Fourth Avenue. At Value Village, Andy bought every silver concho belt in sight, put them all on at

personal following, entered Warhol's "Factory" and attempted to murder him. Warhol narrowly survived several critical gunshot wounds.

Lonesome Cowboys was in the can, unedited. Andy had conceived it as a four-hour abstract western. Paul Morrissey edited the film into a 110-minute commercial vehicle. *Lonesome Cowboys* proved to be Andy's last film, and also a very personal statement — just as *8 1/2* was to Fellini.

On February 22, 1987, we were driving home from California when I heard on the radio that Andy Warhol had died in his hospital bed the day after a surgeon removed his gall bladder. Pathologically fearful of hospitals and distrustful of doctors, he had put

*Andy neither ate nor drank;
he munched on a chocolate bar. (In fact,
I never saw Andy eat anything but
chocolate the entire time he
was in Tucson.)*

once, and never took them off, even when he boarded the plane for New York.

That evening I took them to El Charro, then still on Broadway, for a Mexican dinner. No one knew what they were eating, but they liked it, and the beer flowed liberally. Andy neither ate nor drank; he munched on a chocolate bar. (In fact, I never saw Andy eat anything but chocolate the entire time he was in Tucson.) There was great mariachi music on the jukebox. Lou Walden jumped up on the table, pulled Viva up, and danced the tango. Owner Monica Flin and her staff didn't blink. We were there until closing.

On June 5, 1968, five months after Andy left Tucson, Valerie Solanis, a deranged member of Warhol's large

off the surgery for years. The cause of death was listed simply as cardiac arrest, and unanswered questions about it still persist.

In some ways, the enigma of Warhol's death is fitting. His life was equally perplexing, a mix of nightclubbing and reticence, public persona and intense privacy, countercultural innovation and determined marketing. He was the most successful commercial artist of his time. He produced feature films, he wrote books, he published his own magazine, *Interview*; he was a photographer; he acted in movies and on "Love Boat"; he had a TV show, produced a play and a rock band, directed TV commercials, and worked as a fashion model. He was whatever you liked best or hated most about him. The quintessential pop artist.

"He was an incredible character," says David Bourdon, an art critic and Warhol biographer. "There are so many conflicting stories and irreconcilable anecdotes, I don't think it can ever be sorted out. I think he's just going to evaporate into legend. He wanted it that way. Facts were always a little unglamorous to him."

There are signs now of increasing respect for his work. At Sotheby's April 1988 estate auction, a painting that was expected to sell for \$40,000 went for \$220,000; another with an estimate of \$50,000 sold for \$176,000. The six-volume catalog, selling for \$95, was Sotheby's costliest ever, and the first to be sold in advance in bookstores nationwide. Sotheby's predicted that the 6,000 items in his estate would go for about \$15 million, but they actually brought more than \$25 million. The proceeds have gone to the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

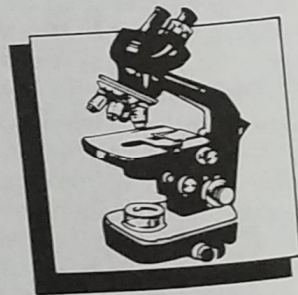
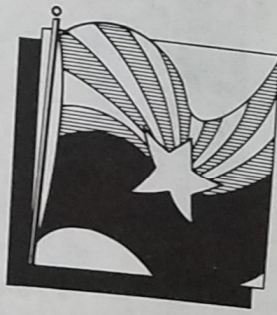
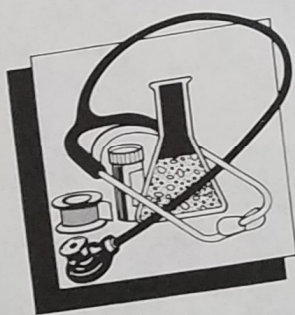
The estate auction pales in comparison to the potential value of an agreement between Warhol's estate and Schlaifer Nance & Co., the marketing firm behind Cabbage Patch dolls. Warhol started a discussion with Schlaifer two years before his death to produce calendars, bedding, paper goods, jewelry and a huge range of retail items whose sales, it has been said, could reach the billion-dollar level. Andy probably would have approved. "Being good in business," he wrote in 1975, "is the most fascinating kind of art."

And he would have loved the fuss, but in his own, unrevealing way.

"There's been a much heightened interest," says Fred Hughes, his longtime manager and now executor of his estate. "Warhol was a hard guy to figure out his reaction. But I think he would have taken it in his stride."

Shirley Pasternack, a long-time film buff, was the director of *Cinema I* from 1965 to 1968. She still lives in Tucson.

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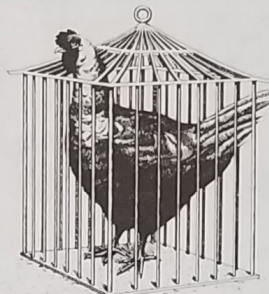
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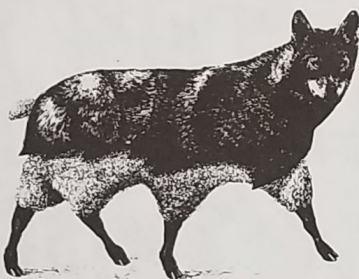
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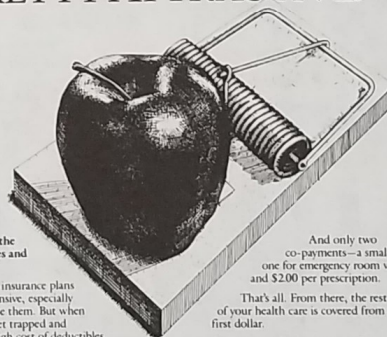
This firmly establishes the link between health care delivery and cost control. Without that link, it's the same old story of more treatment, and more cost.

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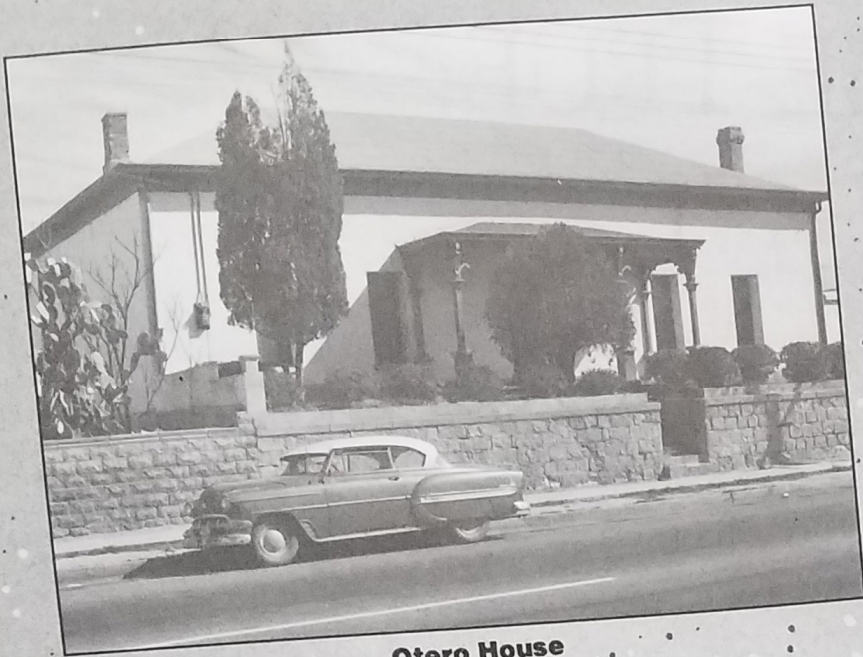
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Otero House



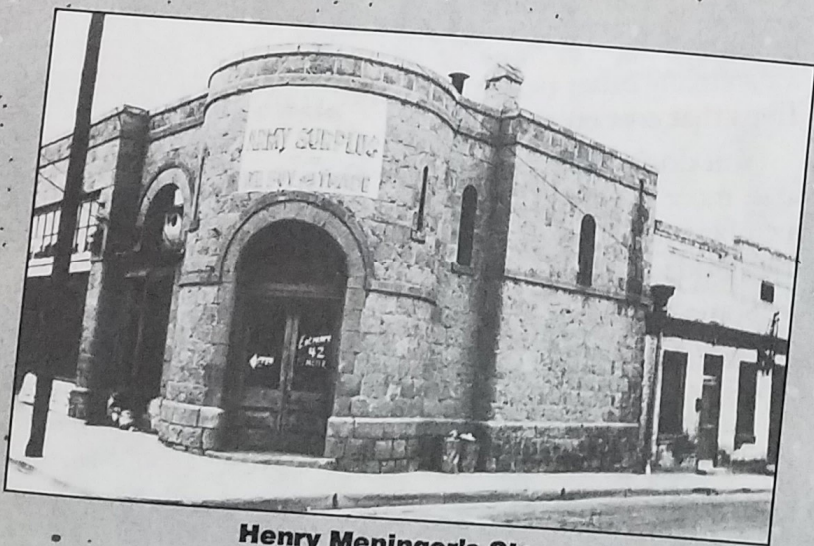
Woman's Club



All Nations Pool Hall



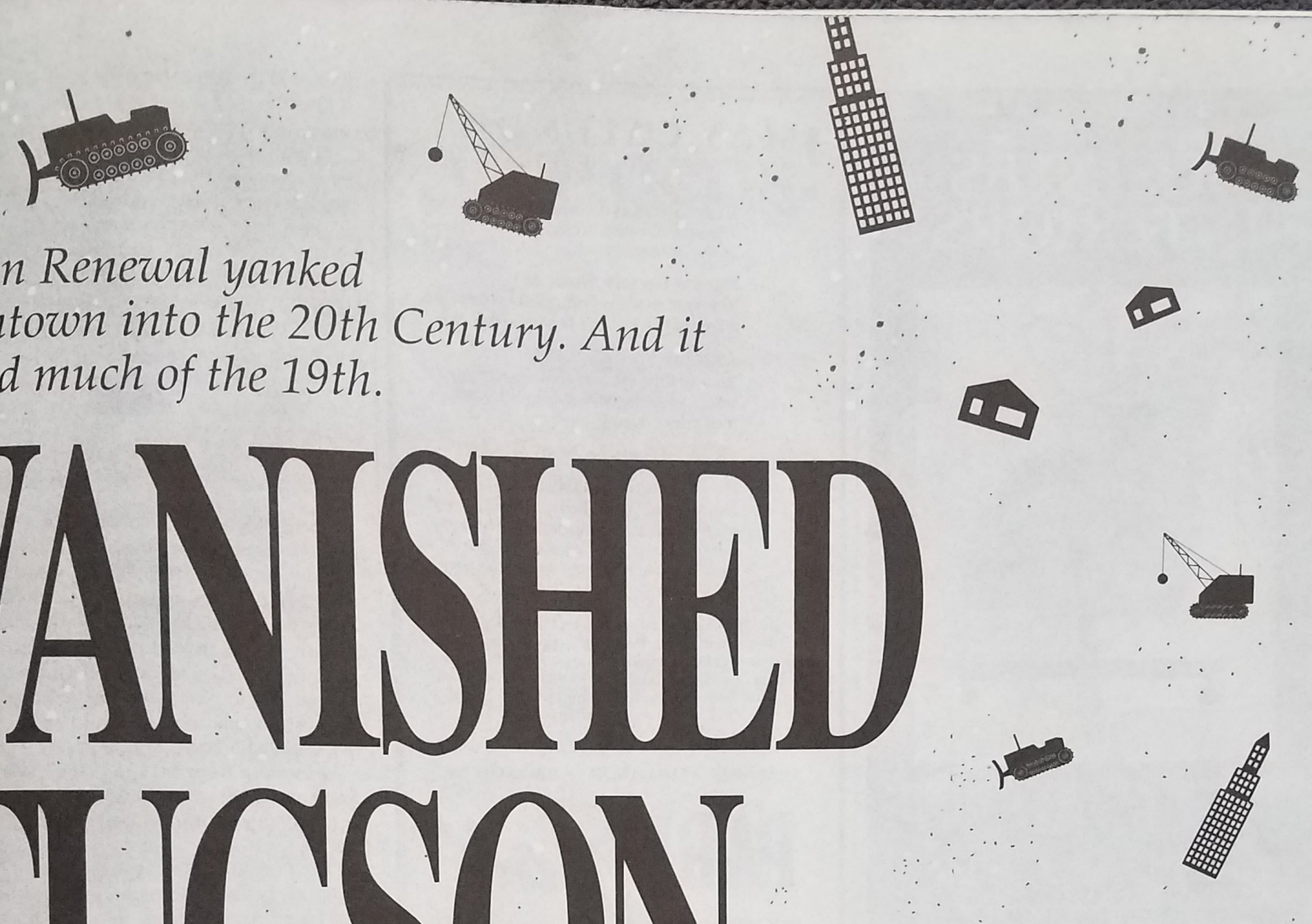
Jacobs House



Henry Meninger's Store



El Charro



Urban Renewal yanked
downtown into the 20th Century. And it
erased much of the 19th.

VANISHED TUCSON

By Janet Mitchell

Photos courtesy of the Arizona Historical Society

It was a throwaway age. Two decades ago, Tucson said good-bye to 260 buildings that had helped distinguish it from Anytown, U.S.A.

During 1968 and 1969, a tangible link to Tucson's past was sacrificed for urban renewal. The Pueblo Center Redevelopment Project leveled 80.2 acres of Tucson's oldest surviving neighborhood to build the Tucson Convention Center, a shopping center, and a four-square-block government complex. The price tag was \$66 million in public and private funds.

Many of the city's most important historic buildings fell to the philosophy that new was better. All were dilapidated, some beyond rehabilitation. But despite protests from the neighborhood, little attempt was made to salvage those structures that might have been preserved.

Roy P. Drachman was chairman of a citizens committee formed in the early sixties to help develop Tucson's proposed urban renewal development program. Addressing a panel of experts from the Urban Land Institute in 1965, he stressed the need for Tucson to "eliminate the slums."

"Even if we do not have any specific uses for some of the areas, we should proceed with the (urban renewal) program and put the areas in a land bank," Drachman was quoted as saying in the April 23, 1965 edition of *The Arizona Daily Star*.

In retaliation and desperation, a group of Tucsonans formed the Preservation of La Placita de la Mesilla Committee.

Alva Torres, committee chairman, advocated restoration and integration of some existing buildings on Broadway and Meyer Avenue, a few of which dated from 1865 and before.

"We fully understand the necessity for the widening of Congress Street, but we feel the new structures could be tastefully blended in with the old," she noted in a letter sent by the committee to Donald Laidlaw, city director of urban renewal development, on August 11, 1967.

In a few cases, they were. Laidlaw recalls that the Samaniego House was saved in a dramatic last-minute reprieve at the insistence of members of the Tucson Heritage Foundation. The house, built in 1881, was spared from demolition just an hour before the razing crew was scheduled to arrive.

"There had been relatively little interest on behalf of city officials in saving it," Laidlaw remembers. "But the Heritage Foundation played an absolutely critical role in making preservation a priority. I could talk business with them."

Twenty years later, does Drachman think Tucson made a mistake?

"I don't feel any qualms at all. I wish we could have kept some more of the older portion of Tucson,

but we did the right thing," he said. "The area had just gone to pot. It's too bad it's gone, but most of the buildings were past the point of being restored. They were dangerous, dilapidated and needed to be demolished."


However, Drachman added that before he formally supported urban renewal, he tried to create an "Old Tucson District." He bought a building on the west side of the placita and spent \$35,000 restoring it, hoping others would follow.

"I was interested in seeing a lot of the older buildings retained and I put my money where my mouth was, but there was little economic support from the community," he said.

Drachman said he still feels it was necessary for Tucson to build the convention center at its present site, but added that he had hoped it would do more for downtown than it has.

"I thought it could save downtown from becoming what it is today, but urban renewal just didn't have the impact on the retail area that we expected," he said.

The impact urban renewal had on Tucson's history can be seen in these photographs from the archives of the Arizona Historical Society.



SABINO OTERO HOUSE
219 South Main Avenue

Once the gracious home of a family whose roots were deep in Arizona history, the Otero house was built to last. The walls were of rock and adobe, and the roof was supported by huge beams cut by hand in the Santa Rita Mountains and carried sixty miles by mule teams. The thick walls and high ceiling were said to have kept the house cool even on an August afternoon.

Begun in 1859 by pioneer rancher Sabino Otero, heir to a Tubac ranch built with a Spanish land grant

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in the eighteenth century, the house took three years to finish. It was one of the first Tucson homes to be completely furnished with items supplied locally.

Until its demolition, historians regarded the home as one of the oldest, most historically significant, and best-preserved buildings in Tucson.

Five years after the house was demolished, the porch that for eighty years had welcomed visitors into the Otero house was resurrected. The old structure was adapted for modern use and now flanks the Territorial Patio at the Arizona Historical Society.



HENRY MENINGER'S STORE
20 South Meyer Avenue

Henry Meninger's Store was a fortress-like building constructed before the turn of the century out of hand-hewn rocks from the 'A' Mountain quarry. Meninger had emigrated to Tucson from France, where buildings were commonly made of stone masonry — and made to last for centuries.

Constructed by Meninger between 1889 and 1896 to house his clothing store, the landmark was sometimes mistakenly identified as a stage coach depot. Nick and Sadie Turk operated a dry goods business at the location from 1918 to 1948. The building was vacant until 1955 when it reopened for business as the Tucson Army Surplus Store, the final tenant for the next thirteen years.

The Pueblo Center Redevelopment Project tried to give away the building on the condition that it be dismantled, moved from its original site and then rebuilt. The new owner would have had to pay all costs and assume public liability for making the move. There were no takers.



WOMAN'S CLUB OF TUCSON
317 West Alameda Street

In 1895, a group of nine ambitious Tucson women formed a literary club to study art, history, current events and drama. Initially, meetings were held in each other's homes.

Membership quadrupled during the next five years, and finding a space large enough to accommodate the women became a problem. They rented the dining room of the Santa Rita Hotel, the Baptist church, the Methodist church, the Old Pueblo Club, and finally a room in the Carnegie Library.

When the club became too large for the room in the library, they began planning to build a clubhouse.

At that time, there was about \$1,400 in the treasury from club dues. Dr. Merrill Fenner, a pioneer physician whose wife was president of the club, donated the lot on which the Woman's Club of Tucson headquarters was built. Various members also made cash contributions, and Tucson businessmen chipped in the last \$500 to cover construction. The building and furnishings totaled \$15,000.

The clubhouse was built in 1914; the Woman's Club of Tucson moved in on the first Monday of March 1915.



JACOBS HOUSE
187 West Alameda Street

This two-story mansion was the height of luxury when it was built in the early 1880s by Barron Jacobs. It also was a minor architectural miracle: an Italianate Victorian built of adobe.

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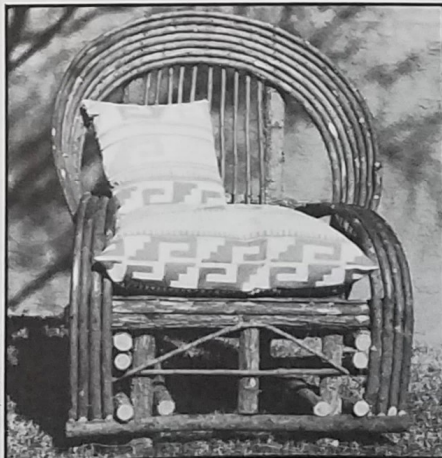


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Barron Jacobs moved to Tucson from San Bernardino, California, in 1867 and opened a general store with his brother, Lionel M. Jacobs. The brothers pioneered Tucson's banking industry when they organized the Old Pueblo's first bank—the Pima County Bank. After two mergers, this institution eventually became the Consolidated National Bank, now the Valley National Bank.

The Jacobs brothers lived in this stately structure for more than twenty-five years. Later occupants included John and Mary Joseph (owners of the OK Cafe), A.F. Ganen (Ganen Bros. Hardware Store), and Harlan N. Richey, a clerk at Steinfeld's.

Situated on the northwest corner of Alameda Avenue and Meyer Street—directly across from City Hall—the Jacobs house was the last home of Abe Salcido's bail bonding company. The site is now the Tucson Museum of Art parking lot.



EL CHARRO

140 West Broadway

El Charro stood its ground and forced the bulldozers to sputter and back off. The restaurant had been a part of Tucson since 1922. It was (and still is) the city's oldest Mexican restaurant in continuous operation by the same family.

Jules Flin purchased the property in 1878 when he came to Tucson from France to do stone masonry work on the San Agustín Church, which stood across the way from El Charro until 1936.

In 1968, his daughter, Monica Flin, was eighty-one years old and facing condemnation proceedings. An out-of-court settlement was reached, but the octogenarian restaurateur already was looking for another location. However, at the urging of the Committee on Municipal Blight, the century-old-adobe once destined for destruction was eventually renovated and incorporated into the La Placita complex.

Today, the restaurant is in another historic house on Court Avenue, and is operated by Ray and Carlotta Flores. Monica Flin was Carlotta's great aunt.



ALL NATIONS POOL HALL

76 South Meyer Avenue

In 1968 downtown Tucson had at least ten billiards parlors clustered around West Congress and South Meyer. Urban renewal took a clean swipe; all were demolished.

They had names like Globe Pool Hall, Leon Jesus Pool Hall, Cabinet Pool Hall, Our Pool Hall, Gomez Pool Hall, El Toro Pool Hall, and the Meyer Street Amusement Parlor.

The building housing the All Nations Pool Hall had continuously been a billiards business for fifty-six years.

Jesus Provencio started things off in 1912 with the Provencio Pool Room. Felix Rivera was owner during 1918 and 1919; Perez Unda gave it a go for the next two years. Each owner changed the name to his own surname.

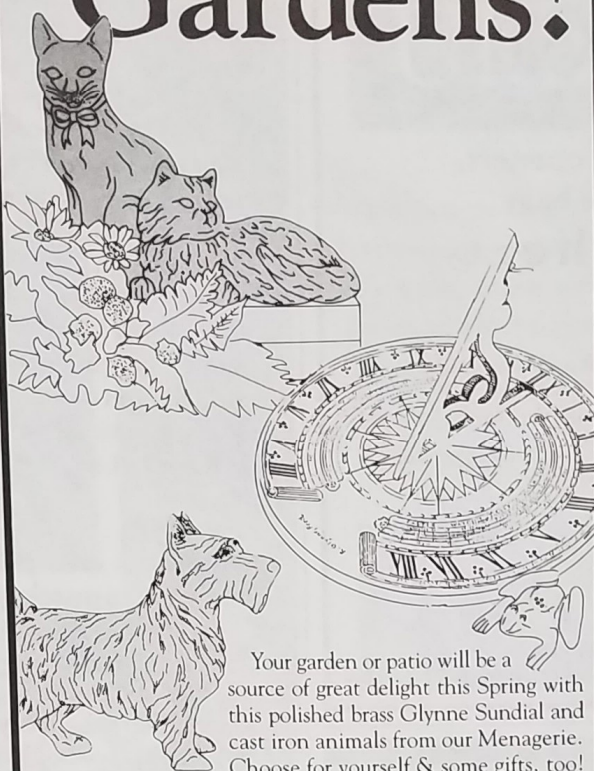
In 1921 Tom Kaneda bought the establishment and it became the Mexicano Pool Hall. He sold out to a Mr. K. Takeyama a decade later. The new owner dubbed the place the Oriental Pool Hall.

In a brief interlude from 1936 until 1938, Harry Levkowitz operated a clothing store.

Charles Phinizey bought the business in 1939. For the next sixteen years it was the All Nations Pool Hall.

The building was vacant from 1955 until the end.

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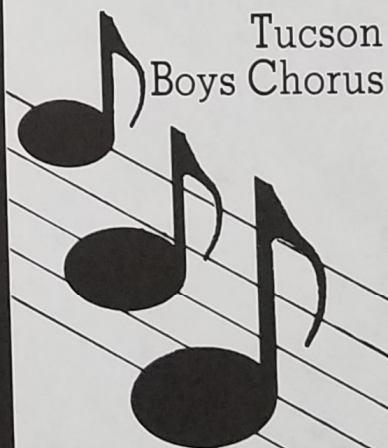
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Kromko from page 29

did have the money or anything. I've never cared about money; I'm not susceptible to influence peddling."

Imagine, though, that it was another politician who had taken such a huge check from Moore, who imagines himself a big power broker. Wouldn't John Kromko have cried foul? "I don't think so, because this was a total business agreement," he says, then pauses. "Oh, I don't know. I might have."

"What can I say? These were really run-down apartments — six of them for \$60,000, you can imagine. They had belonged to a friend; I could have fixed them up. It just seemed a shame not to bid on them."

He isn't an introspective man. He has always been puzzled by the phrase "I've got to discover who I am," occasionally voiced by his women friends. No eighties-style angst for him: The one childhood regret he'll cop to is that his parents kept no books around the house (although their son grew up to read quantum physics for entertain-

years ago. But he isn't interested in contemplating this puzzle in his personality, either.

He never married, probably because his obsession with politics and meetings "is not conducive to good family life," he says, in answer to a question. He doesn't aspire to be a parent, because he doesn't feel qualified.

But enough of this personal conversation! Let's go hang out at his favorite video arcade, he suggests, his hangdog expression brightening. Kromko can normally score 75,000 at Donkey Kong to save the fair maiden from the beastly gorilla. Today he hits only 20,000 or so; a blonde in the next aisle, wearing a short jeans dress with a scooped-out back, is worrying him more than the fair maiden, he jokes, hiding behind the persona that is another of his favorite, harmless games. "You think that young guy she's with even knows what he's got?" he sighs.

That reminds him of a story, hot gossip in the legislative halls, that makes him groan. A pretty intern came running up to him earlier this year calling, "Mr. Kromko, Mr. Kromko" in a

***Yes, he keeps everybody laughing.
But the key to John Kromko, when all
else is said, is this: He's hungry to be seen
as more than a funny man.***

ment). He's read about all the traumas teen-agers face, and figures he must have gone through similar experiences, but he just can't remember being upset about any of them. "It's like now: I just go home and each day is the same. I don't have any ups and I don't have any downs."

Never comfortable examining his personal self or past, he always finds a way to steer conversations back to the global picture, to politics and policy. So he won't provide insights into another contradiction he's recently displayed: On the home front in Tucson, Kromko is devoting his rare free time to a loving restoration of a historic 1913 house in the West University neighborhood. Dressed in paint-soaked jeans and work shirt, he's sweating the smallest details, like mouldings, hand-made windows and stained glass, paint hues for the bedrooms, pepper trees for the front yard. This is astounding to longtime friends, who remember his former hovel near University Hospital, furnished with nothing but political pamphlets, half-finished campaign signs, a monster computer, a couple of pet birds and an assortment of formerly stray cats.

"I was just renting the earlier house," he explains quickly. "This one is mine."

A gentle person, he "kind of likes to watch football," so he finally broke down and bought a TV a couple of

breathy voice. "Yes?" he eagerly answered. She told him, "My mother used to go out with you."

Yes, he keeps everybody laughing. But the key to John Kromko, when all else is said, is this: He's hungry to be seen as more than a funny man. The word "wacko," even when used affectionately to describe him, always makes him wince. When *USA Today* TV came to Phoenix to interview him in March about his bill to outlaw cock-fighting, Kromko gave such somber, concerned answers that Arizonans wouldn't have recognized him. Behind all the joking and self-deprecating wit, he takes *himself* seriously, and that will keep him going, circulating petitions and irking the power boys, into the next century.

On that recent spring day in the legislature, Kromko found himself on the lonely end of three different 59-1 votes. But the one that really hurt was the amendment he almost won, to protect consumers from obnoxious telephone solicitors. Back in his office at 5 p.m., he seemed genuinely disappointed, and his blood sugar had plummeted.

But he forged on, working late into the evening, thinking, thinking, plotting new strategies to bait Republicans, scribbling amendments, contemplating new attempts to slip his serious bills into law. And most of all, believing.



The Village

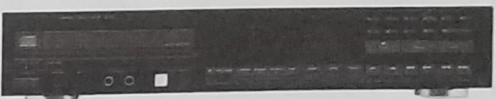
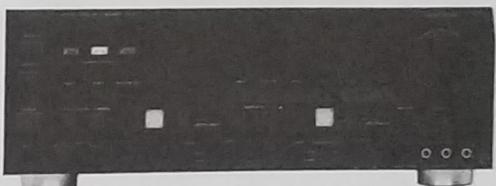
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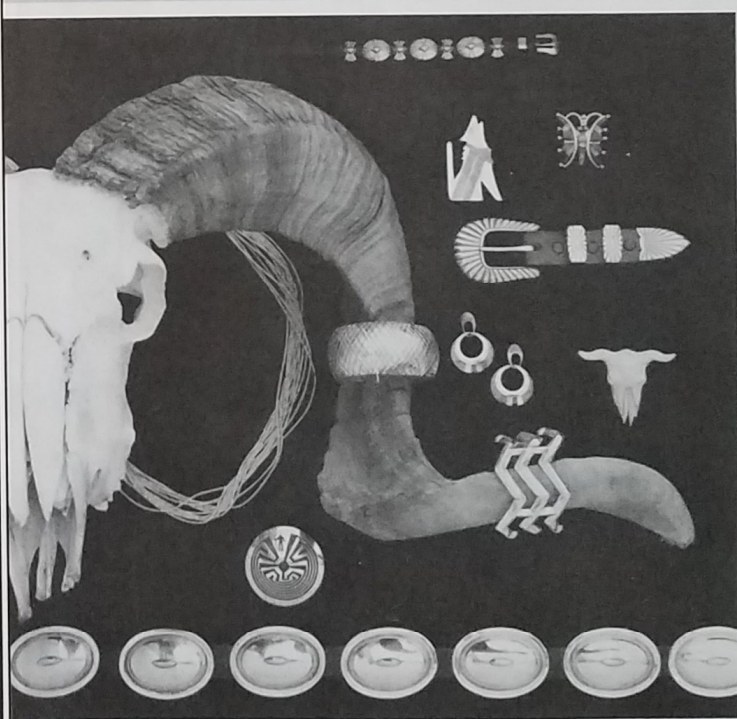
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BYRD

QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

*A mother's love comes to bloom on
a long desert journey*

BY BYRD BAYLOR

One summer evening we were walking through an old residential area on South 9th Avenue not far from the railroad tracks, the pleasant kind of neighborhood where people sit outside at dusk and nod to you as you pass by on the sidewalk.

At one house we could see a cluster of people back in the side yard, chairs drawn up in a circle around a tree. Someone, just going through the front gate, noticed us and turned and said, "They say the nightbloomer back there has thirty-one flowers tonight."

Of course we followed him and no one seemed surprised that three strangers had joined those who already sat there watching a cactus bloom. Its thin, dry, dead-looking stems twisted perhaps five or six feet up the trunk of the tree around which people were seated. Everyone seemed comfortable and at ease, enveloped in the heavy perfume of the mysteriously beautiful desert nightbloomer cereus.

Another flower you could admire awhile and then go on about your business. But for the Queen of the Night you must give yourself up, forget where you were going, gaze hypnotized as the luminous white petals open wider and wider.

On this particular night, people told their own *Reina de la Noche* stories, stories of desert people finding the bloom at night by knowing that scent, so unlike any other. They say one blossom may scent the air 100 feet away.

The Tohono O'odham have an ancient story which explains why the nightbloomer cereus is different from any other desert flower.

They say that many generations ago, a young Tohono O'odham girl fell in love with a Yaqui warrior who had come north in a hunting party. She left her tribe and went with him to his home far south on the Rio Yaqui.

In those days people had many skills that are now lost, and this girl's mother had no difficulty in contacting her daughter through the strength of her own mind. At sunset every day, she would walk out to a certain rocky place and call the girl, and the spirit of the girl would come to her. In that way, she knew that her daughter was safe and

happy and had a small son beside her.

She also knew when finally her daughter was alone and dying from an illness. She could hear her daughter call to her for help.

The old woman was very tiny and bent, with arms and legs as skinny and brown as sticks. Her hair was white and she did not tie it up or cover her head as other women in her tribe did. She let her white hair flow and it blew any which way in the wind, wild and untidy. People called her Old Mother White Head.

Old Mother White Head went off alone at dawn. All she knew was that she must go southward across many deserts and mountains. In those days people had not yet forgotten how to talk to animals and birds, so she could ask directions from blackbirds and coyotes along the way. The Little People fed her wild honey to keep her alive. No one is sure how long that journey took.

When she finally reached Yaqui country, she could not understand the language of the people, but a jackrabbit and a blackbird showed her the place where her daughter was lying on a mat on the ground.

The daughter was near death. Her only wish was that her son not grow up to be a warrior. She wanted him to grow up in the gentle life of her own tribe. She told her mother to hide the boy in her burden basket and to leave that night. Otherwise, it would be too late because as soon as she died, the child would be taken to a camp in the mountains by her husband's people.

Old Mother White Head was already exhausted and did not see how she could make another long journey so soon, but she hid her grandson in the burden basket and went around the village pretending to pick up a little firewood here and there. When it was dark, she started north, but this time she had a child to carry and she moved more slowly than before. An old coyote led her through the foothills by night and let her sleep by day, but she was constantly afraid because she knew that people from the village were following her tracks, searching for the child.

Finally, she felt her strength fading and knew her only hope was to give a long, loud call to I'toi, Elder Brother. I'toi answered in his own voice, telling her she must not stop to rest, that she must walk in the daytime along the arroyos and washes.

His words seemed odd to her because the land where she walked was flat and hard and there was no arroyo in sight. Even so, an arroyo appeared and the old coyote ran along the top of the bank, keeping watch. Whenever anyone came near, the old woman hid close to the bank under any little bush until the birds gave her a sign that it was safe to walk again. Sometimes I'toi himself walked along beside her, encouraging her. At these times, he liked to make himself very small and old.

After many days of walking, Old Mother White Head let her wild white hair be seen above the arroyo bank, and she heard a cry as a group of searchers ran toward her. She called for I'toi, and he came singing a powerful earth song. As he sang, the banks of the arroyo moved toward her and closed around her as she held the child above her head. I'toi suddenly appeared very large and young, and he took the boy in his arms and disappeared.

When the Yaquis reached the place where they had glimpsed the old woman, all they could find were two dry, brown sticks and one or two white hairs.

Old Mother White Head felt the touch of the cool, safe earth and was at peace. She did not want to move again.

I'toi came back at sunset and reported that the child was now at home with his own people and that his life would be peaceful and good. So the grandmother's work was done, and she asked I'toi to let her stay in the earth, exactly where she was, forever. He

touched her thin arms, those withered brown sticks. A tender white bud formed from that touch and opened into the most beautiful flower that has ever been seen in the desert night.

This is why, once a year at dusk in May or June (or whenever it feels like blooming) a pale, glowing flower opens on its thin, twisting stalks and fills the darkness with its own fragrance.

That is why the desert nightblooming cereus is almost impossible to find when it is not blooming. It has to look like a dusty stick or a dead creosote branch — except during its one night of beauty.

And of course that is why its power calls you to stop whatever you are doing and sit with the Queen of the Night.

(Note: This version of the origin of the desert nightblooming cereus is based on a story collected by Harold Bell Wright when he was living in Tucson in the early 1920s. He first heard it from his friend, Mrs. Will Kitt, who took him to the reservation and introduced him to many of the elders of the Tohono O'odham tribe. Tribal members Richard Hendricks and Hugh Norris became his guides and interpreters, and they spent months together visiting remote villages and hearing the oldest stories anyone could remember. After he wrote their stories, Wright went back to the original storytellers time after time until they were satisfied with his efforts. The collection, *Long Ago Told*, (now long out of print), was published in 1929 by D. Appleton.

Byrd Baylor has written several award-winning children's books and a novel about *Indians in Tucson*, *Yes Is Better Than No*.

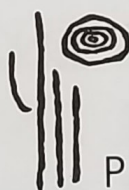


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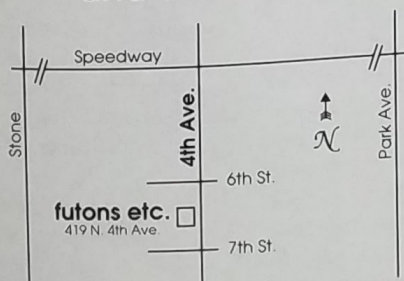


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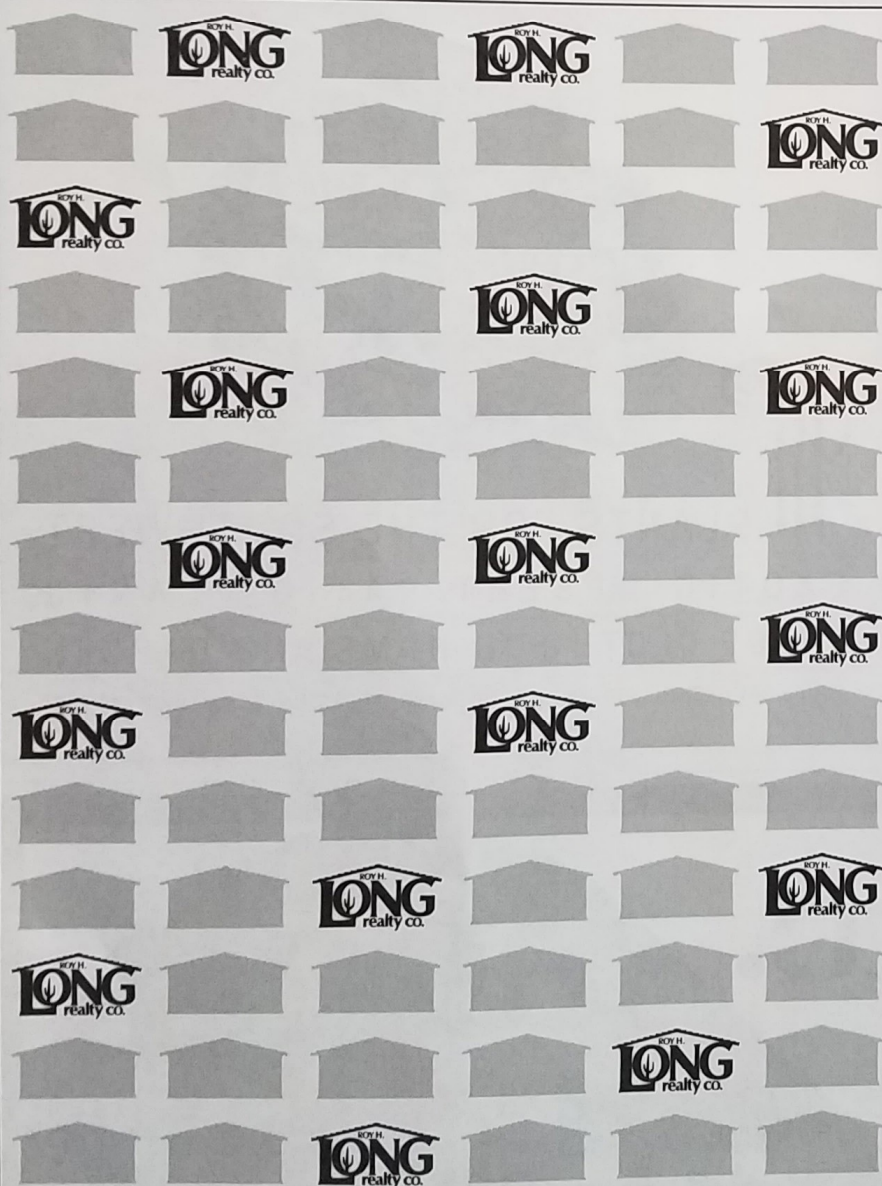


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LOCAL CUSTOM

TRAIN TO ETERNITY

How a young Mexican engineer became a hero

BY JIM GRIFFITH

It's story time again. This time our tale takes us to the recently revived mining town of Nacozari, Sonora, and to a time when American companies owned most of the industry in Mexico. Phelps Dodge, the company behind the development of Bisbee and Douglas, also operated the rich copper mines in Nacozari. The company built well, and if you go to Nacozari today, you'll find parts of it looking more like an Arizona mining town than a Mexican community. There are square buildings of dressed stone with pitched roofs much like many of the old ones you can see in Bisbee, for instance. (There also used to be a two-story adobe hotel that was still in business when I visited in 1974. On the second-

destroyed, García himself and twelve others were killed, and many more were wounded. But the town of Nacozari and its inhabitants were saved.

García's act of heroism was and is remembered in many ways. García himself was given posthumous honors, including the American Cross of Honor. (That a U.S. citation went to a Mexican citizen also says something about the influence of Phelps Dodge in those days.) The town he saved now appears on the maps as Nacozari de García. Statues and monuments to the brave engineer are found in many parts of Mexico; there's one, complete with an old switch engine, on Calle Adolfo Lopez Mateos, the main northbound street through Nogales. Nov. 7 is still

Jesús García saw responsibility, responded to it, and lost his life in the process of saving the lives of others.

floor landing — and it was a pretty creaky second floor even then — was a bookcase full of cheap westerns published in the 1920s. All in English, of course.)

The story goes like this: On Monday, Nov. 7, 1907, a young engineer named Jesús García was hauling supplies, including two cars full of dynamite, from the Nacozari depot to the mining operation at Pilares. His engine, a small 0-6-0 made in Pittsburgh, was in excellent condition, except for one recent development — a faulty smokestack that spewed hot cinders back onto the train. As he was leaving town, he and his fireman noticed that a box of dynamite in the leading car had caught fire. A brakeman tried to throw the box off the train, but the heat drove him away. García ordered the crew to jump, and cranked on all possible steam in an attempt to roll the train out of town to a level place where he could safely abandon it. The danger was not from the dynamite itself, which can burn for a long time without exploding, but from the fuses and detonating caps that were somewhere in the load. García had barely arrived at the train yard called *el seis* — number six — when the dynamite blew up. The engine was

celebrated in Nacozari, and has become Mexico's national day of the railroad worker. Nacozari's famous composer Don Sylvestre Rodriquez (incidentally, the man who taught music to Leonardo Yanez, composer of the famous *corrido* "El Moro de Cumpas") wrote a march in García's honor. And Mexico's popular bards, the *corridistas*, have honored the hero in song and verse.

I know of three *corridos* about the incident. One, "Maquina 501," is so popular it can be called a part of Sonora's artistic patrimony. It focuses on certain dramatic moments — García's farewell to his mother at the end of his lunch break, moments before the tragedy; the discovery of the burning dynamite, then the explosion itself. Some liberties are taken with the facts: although García is remembered as ordering the rest of his crew to jump, the ballad has the fireman urging García to save himself. This is so he can reply with the epic lines:

*Jesús García contesta,
"Yo pienso muy diferente;
Yo no quiero ser la causa
de que muera tanta gente."*

(Jesús García answers,

"I think very differently;
I don't want to be the cause
of so many people dying.")

A heroic understatement on the lines of John Henry's "A man ain't nothing but a man/But before I let that steam drill beat me down/I'll die with my hammer in my hand."

Questions remain, of course. Was García's act necessary to save the town? (Don Dederer and Bob Robles in their book *Goodbye, García, Adios*, published by Northland Press in 1976, conclude that it was.) Was the tragedy the consequence of previous mistakes? Probably so: the regular conductor was out sick that day, and he likely would not have allowed the dynamite cars to be placed next to the engine, a move contrary to established rules. But these questions cannot obscure the fact that García saw a responsibility, responded to it, and lost his life in the process of saving the lives of others. It wasn't necessarily a suicidal move, remember; if he had made it past *el seis* he might have jumped to safety and let the load blow up in unoccupied territory. He took his chances and lost.

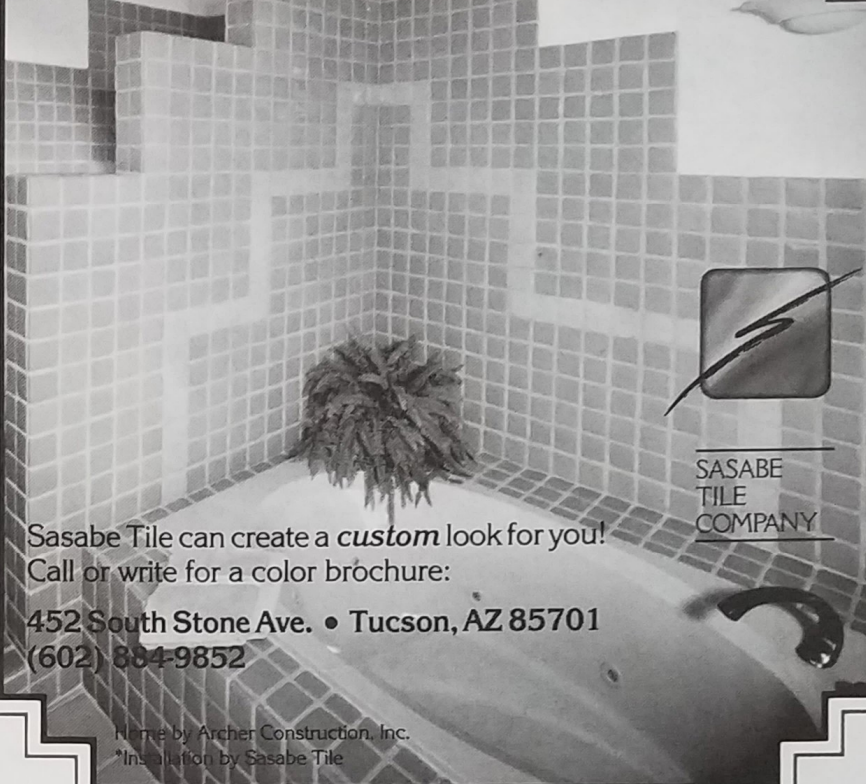
While we are talking about heroes, I've got another local favorite to mention in passing: Estevan Ochoa, native of Chihuahua and founder of the im-

portant early Tucson mercantile company of Tully and Ochoa. When the Confederates occupied Tucson in 1862, Sr. Ochoa was ordered to abandon his stance as a Union supporter. He answered: "It is out of the question for me to swear allegiance to any party or power hostile to the United States government, for to that government I owe all my prosperity and happiness. When, sir, do you wish me to leave?" Fine words, a refreshing example of honesty and loyalty, especially noble in the context of the 1980s.

The parallels aren't exact, of course. García was a young engineer who, according to some accounts, probably was suffering from a hangover contracted from an all-night bout of partying and *serenatas*, while Ochoa was a man of substance (and presumably sobriety) in his community. García gave his life, while Ochoa returned to Tucson two weeks later with the Union Army and went on to become one of our early mayors. But each rose to the occasion that presented itself and each is a remarkable representative of a cultural tradition that involves honor, bravery... and no little sense of style.

Jim Griffith is director of the Southwest Folklore Center at the University of Arizona.

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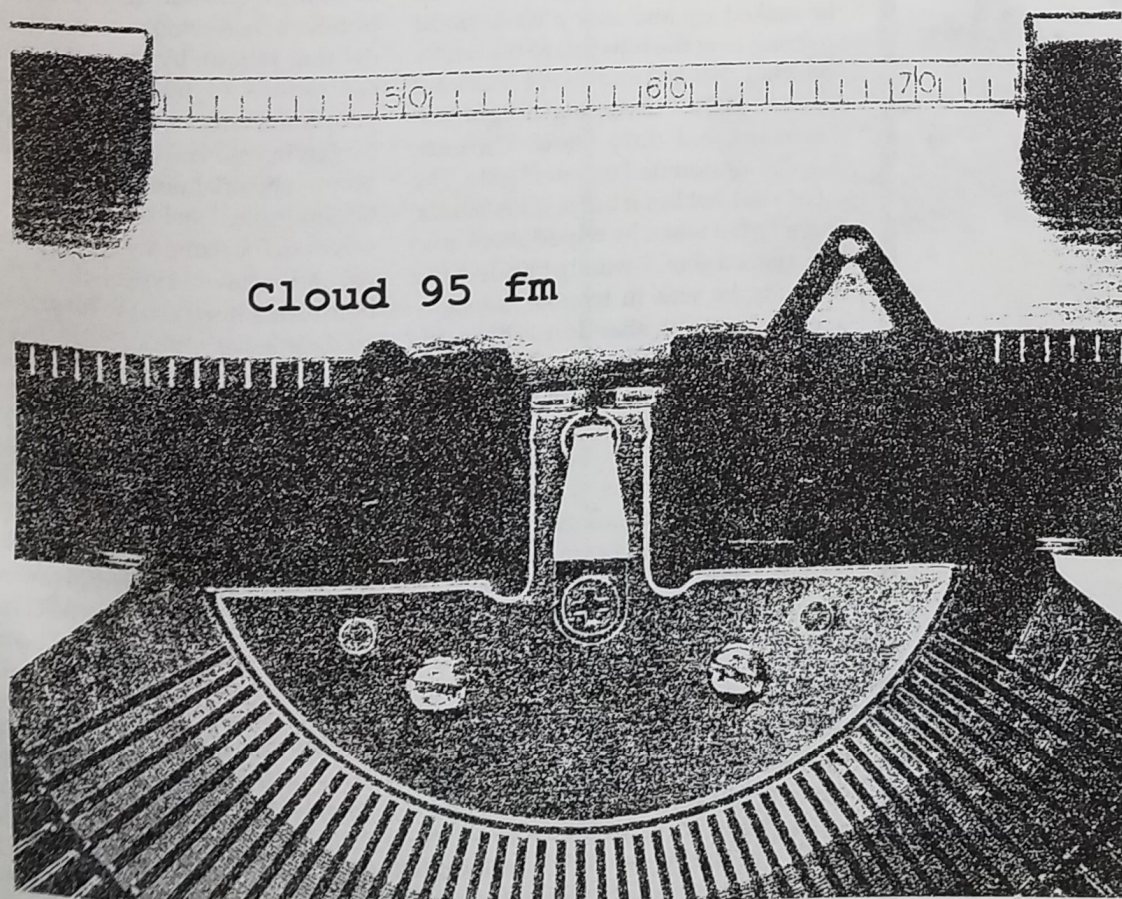


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BOOKS

'THE NATIVES ARE RESTLESS'

Damned right. The government is killing them.

BY RAY RING

In this era of cynical aftermaths, where disinformation deserves to be a word and cover-up is a job description and sometimes the only song seems to be the lingering Watergate blues, anyone still hanging onto the tiniest vestige of faith in government should check out this hammerhead of a book: *Fallout: An American Nuclear Tragedy* (University of Arizona Press, \$29.95 cloth, \$14.95 paperback). It will pound that faith right out of you.

"It was a scene of terrible and quite deadly beauty," writes author Philip L. Fradkin, describing the "roiling, blinding, white-orange-red" fireball and hypnotic radioactive mushroom cloud of Shot Harry — or to those who knew him better, just plain Harry. It was 1953, and the Atomic Energy Commission was naming its nuclear blasts like they were chummy but eccentric visiting uncles. As "a bruised mass of cloud," shrugging off his distinctive mushroom shape and looking pink and dirty, Harry visited thousands of people as he drifted east on the prevailing winds from the test site in Nevada. And as he drifted, he proved himself much less chummy than insidious.

Consider it an update of the idyllic Western scene: Elmer Jackson was out riding the range in the middle-of-nowhere Arizona Strip country north of the Grand Canyon, herding cattle from one stock pond to another, when "he looked up and saw a dark cloud hovering over the hills just to the north. The wind changed and swept the cloud down on him," dropping a light ash that resembled dirty snow. Curious, Jackson dismounted to investigate. The ash wasn't hot but it burned his hands, and his eyes when he wiped them, and his exposed skin. Partially blinded and realizing he was in trouble, he managed to remount, abandoned his cattle and coaxed his horse into finding the way home. Jackson's skin was left mottled with reddish-brown patches resembling "old leather or burned flesh," which peeled repeatedly and never did heal. It took nearly twenty years for Jackson, a former mayor of Kanab, Utah, to die. The final diagnosis was cancer of the thyroid. It could just have easily been death by government.

The fallout that dusted Elmer Jackson and other unsuspecting residents of northern Arizona, Utah and Nevada during the series of 124 open-air nuclear test explosions from 1951 to 1962 was ultimately and accurately labeled "the greatest civilian tragedy"

in the U.S. since the Civil War. In concentrations known to be dangerous even then, the downwind fallout contaminated the countryside and small towns of the rural region, infiltrated food supplies, and inflicted illnesses and killed with an ascendant logic: The livestock, including sheep by the thousands, were the first to go. Then the children, who died of leukemia and cancer of the thyroid and other cancers linked to radiation. And finally, slowly eaten away by cancers over the decades, the adults: ranchers, housewives, truck drivers, miners. They fit the general profile of being patriotic, devout believers (this was Mormon country) who readily accepted authority — the sort of citizens who rushed onto hilltops, reassured that gazing at the eerie blasts puffing on the horizon, that leaving their babies out in playpens in the sparkling dry rain that followed, that drinking the milk from cows whose hides were noticeably burned, was perfectly all right. But trusting was dangerous and, lessons be learned, was precisely why they got screwed over so royally.

Just how did the government, led by the AEC but with the conspiracy of federal health and justice agencies, do it? By consciously suppressing and distorting research that showed the dangers from radioactive fallout, by deciding again and again to avoid bad publicity by issuing no warnings about drifting fallout, by downplaying concentrations of fallout discovered in people and animals and food supplies, by having no real monitoring system set up while claiming to have one — the lies multiplied and layered upon themselves in the name of national security: we had to have a better bomb, a bigger bomb, in a hurry, so the consequences be damned.

When the damned and their next-of-kin finally did rise up and challenge, first by dutifully filing administrative claims that were slapped down, and then by joining a stubborn lawsuit filed in federal court in Salt Lake City, the reaction of government was only to proceed on its philosophy of sovereign immunity — even as one AEC radiation monitor who concealed the danger reported early on, "The natives are getting restless."

Nearly 1,200 restless natives became plaintiffs in the suit, filed as *Irene Allen v. The United States of America*. Allen, atop the alphabetical list of plaintiffs, was a resident of Hurricane, Utah; her first husband had watched the

blasts from the family's rooftop and died a few years later from leukemia, and her second husband died of cancer of the pancreas. "I really have had a hard life," Allen once told a town meeting conducted by Sen. Orrin Hatch, explaining her main desire (echoed by most of the other plaintiffs) was only to make sure "this wouldn't happen again to any of the generations coming up after us."

When trial was held in 1982, lawyers led by the dogged Dale Haralson of Tucson and flamboyant former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall presented scientific evidence revealing, among other things, that radioactive iodine in milk supplies was causing thyroid cancers, that the whole southern third of Utah (a state that had ranked last in rates of cancer) had leukemia rates 2.4 times higher than normal, and that the five counties closest to the blast sites had leukemia rates 3.4 times higher than normal — and radiation was likely the cause.

Despite the wealth of evidence, which clearly established negligence, incompetence, rampant covering-your-ass syndrome and deliberate public deception and endangerment by the government, the case — so typically — balanced on a pinpoint legal issue totally unrelated to the facts: can citizens hold government responsible in any way for the results, no matter how bad, of national policy? Sometimes, was the judgment in district court. But with the strict application of Reagan-era Supreme Court decisions on appeal, the final answer became resoundingly: no. The fallout victims won nothing, not even an honest admission that a mistake was made. It seems the U.S. government is free to do whatever it wants, no matter who gets hurt. "The law," writes Fradkin, "was blind to morality and compassion, and the law was not properly vengeful."

There are strengths and weaknesses in this book. Fradkin, a veteran journalist and author of three other books, including "A River No More," became so convinced by his voluminous research that he hammers us from the opening pages with accusations of crimes by government. How much more effective it would have been to allow us to make those discoveries on our own, as the story unfolded. And organizationally, he's overwhelmed by his material, the complexity and size of which is indicated by the inclusion of 54 pages of footnotes. But the book reads easily enough, and by covering every aspect of the story, he succeeds in portraying the government not as monolithic, but as made up of individual bureaucrats and scientists who shout arguments behind the scenes and some of whom risk their own careers by being sympathetic and helpful to the fallout victims. And Fradkin strives also to illustrate the failures of other institutions, such as Congress and the press.

The real strength of this book is its message: when it comes to fallout from bomb blasts, or more currently, concerns about radioactive wastes and atomic power plants (regulated by the metamorphosed AEC/Department of Energy), or the dangers of nuclear and chemical weapons production, poisons in fruit and vegetables and drinking water and antibiotic-saturated meats; when it comes to trusting government to do anything to protect its own citizens when there are higher stakes, watch out. Watch your own back. As one Utah rancher concluded after the dust of justice settled, it was all "a great disappointment, but a kind of relief. We won't have our hopes up anymore."

Ray Ring is a novelist and free-lance journalist. He was named the 1984 Virg Hill Newsperson of the Year by the Arizona Press Club.

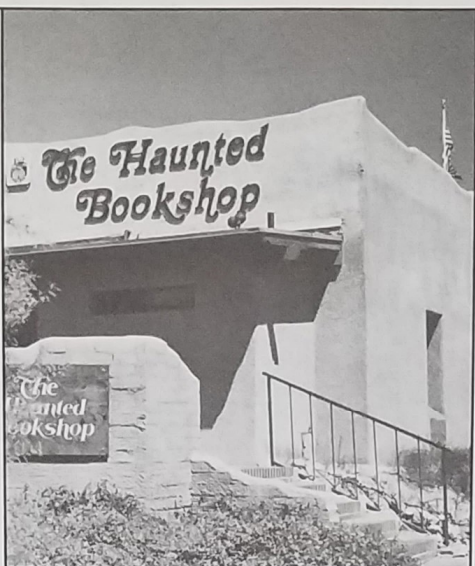


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ONE OF US

Carla Huesgen is thirteen years old and is in the seventh grade at Utterback Middle School. When she's not in school, or practicing ballet, she's hanging out at the mall. She wants to be an actress.

I've been going to malls every weekend for the last year, from about 10, 11 or 12—that's when the stores open—'til about 4 or 5 p.m. Most of the time I shop, I buy presents, gifts. I've gone without any money before, just to go, just to look. But normally, it's like twenty dollars. I get it from my savings account. I've always saved money and my grandparents always give me money and when I get it for gifts, I put it in my savings account.

Normally, a friend spends the night on Friday and we'll get up and get ready. That means getting dressed, and it takes about two hours. I take a shower, fix my hair; I don't like makeup, really. Plus, we're like half-asleep so it takes us a long time and I make pancakes most of the time from out of a box.

Then we call the bus to make sure of the right time. We go to Tucson Mall, that's the easiest one and the biggest one. And then we normally go to just about every store. By the end of the day, we've been to all the interesting stores, except places like brides-and-grooms stores or sporting goods stores. Most people go to MGA. I go to



Laura Greenberg

Carla Huesgen

The Limited, Spencer's. I buy posters and incense in Spencer's. I get posters of groups like INXS and U2 and The Cure. Normally, if we get there around 12, we just shop for around an hour and then we go to Picnic Place and most of the time eat at Egeee's or Hamburger Express.

We go just to hang out, see other people, look at guys and meet them. We don't really talk to them, we follow them, chase them all over the mall, or they follow you but you don't really talk to them. You see new ones every time. I look at any kind. Male. My age or a little older. A lot of college guys look at me, but I know that they're just... they look at any girl.

And then, so we look at each other but we just kind of smile and laugh and blush and walk away.

There are stoners, preps, skaters, and a few hippie wannabees. Stoners are people who take drugs, and most of the time they listen to heavy metal, and I don't really get along with people like that. They hang out in the mall a lot, they're always in little groups and they only look at their own kind. Skaters are almost always guys and they are usually in the Galleria at Hot Topic and they also go to Van's—that's a new store for skaters in Tucson Mall. They're in skate clothes with their boards. Preps are probably the most at the mall because

they're always going to MGA and getting the newest styles and they're just really into style. There's also a new wave group, they're kind of like modern hippies... peace signs all over everything. I'm called that, kind of, because I wear a lot of tie-dye, but I'm not. They're a minority though and they don't really go to malls much. There are also just... normal people. I don't really know what I am, but I don't like to be called a "normie"—it means you're not really distinctive. I'm kind of a prep. Most people call me a prep, but I like skaters so I'm kind of like a prep, kind of like a skater, not anything like a stoner, kind of like a new wave person. Something like

that. I don't like classifying people, but I do. It's just a way of describing people. It just seems that everyone fits into something.

The longest I spent in an actual store was probably a department store and maybe half an hour, or forty-five minutes. In the summer I go about twice a week. Yeah, it's kind of like day camp. The worst part of going into malls is not having any money, no guys, or going without friends. Or if you're with your mom and she's going to get a drill or something really boring. Curtains are bad or things like appliances or telephones or wallpaper, stuff like that. Paint. That's really bad.

DANIEL SNYDER, PHOTO

PETER ALVAREZ

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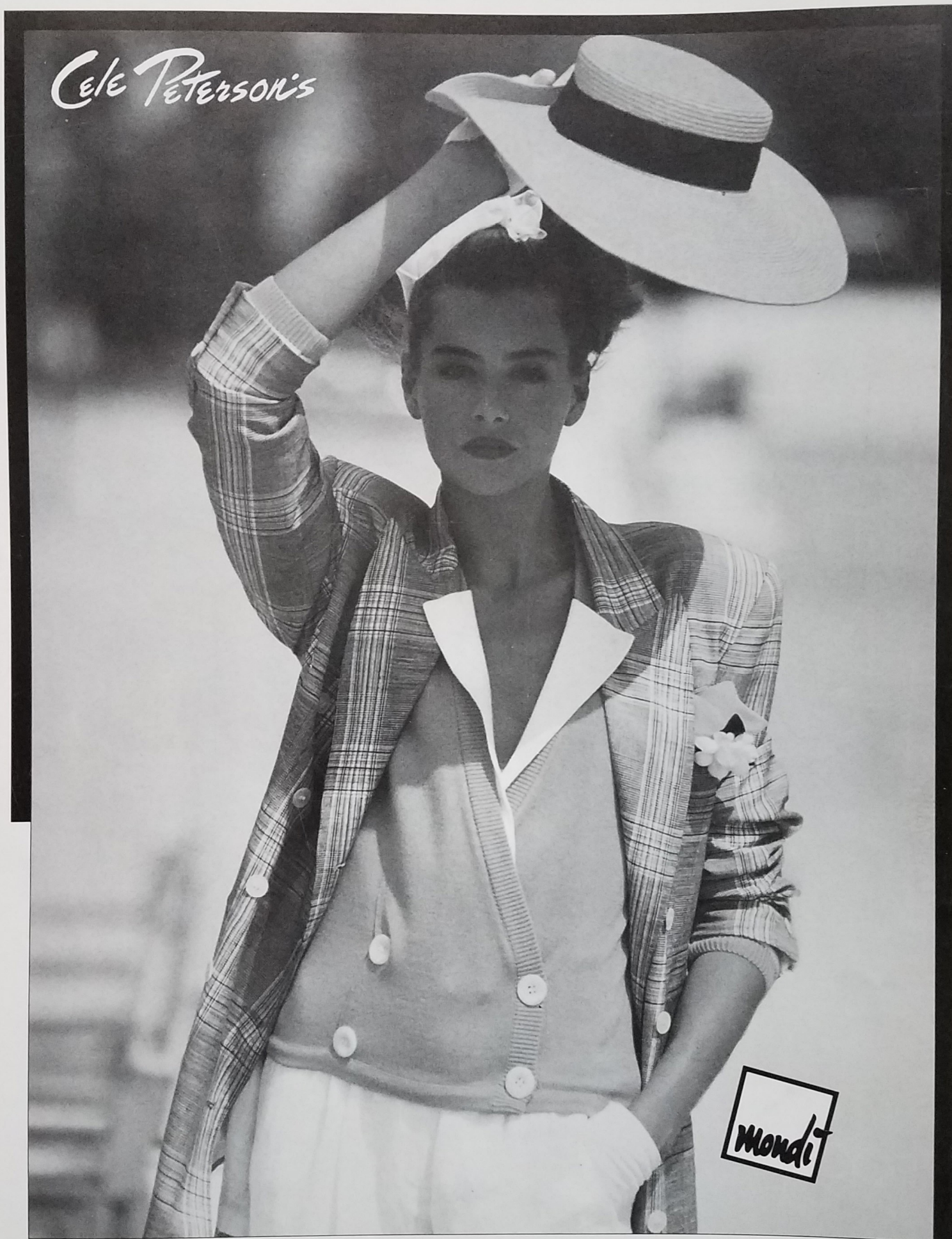
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